

**HUMAN RESOURCE AUDIT AND STAFF PERFORMANCE IN
ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE OF MALAWI'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**MASTER OF ARTS (PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
MANAGEMENT) THESIS**

KUSENI LEMANI VISABWE

**University of Malawi
Chancellor College**

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MANAGEMENT) THESIS**

By

KUSENI LEMANI VISABWE

Bachelor of Arts (HRM) –University of Malawi

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Department in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of
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**University of Malawi
Chancellor College**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my original work and has not been presented for any award at any University for similar purposes. All the sources of information from other people's work used in this study have been acknowledged and added to the list of references.

KUSENI LEMANI VISABWE

Full Legal Name

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this dissertation represents the students' own work. It is therefore submitted with our approval.

Signature _____ Date _____

Lewis B. Dzimbiri, PhD (Professor)

First Supervisor

Signature _____ Date _____

Master Dicks Mfunne, MA (Lecturer)

Second-Supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Zione Mtekama-Visabwe for her patience and encouragement throughout the study period. To my wonderful daughters Ivy and Favour who brought more joy to my life. Special thanks to my parents Mr and Mrs Visabwe, my brothers and sisters for their words of encouragement during the whole study period, in particular, my brother Edwin Visabwe for being my role model.

May God bless you all!

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ABSTRACT

This study establishes respondents' perception about the link between HR audit and staff performance in the Ministry of Education. Specifically, the study determines the extent HR audits are applied in the Ministry, examines benefits of HR audits, HR audit approaches applied, and challenges associated with HR audits. To achieve this, the study utilizes probability, stratified random sampling technique with a quantitative approach where a questionnaire has been used to collect data that has been analyzed through SPSS and Excel. The study finds that human resource audits contribute to improved staff performance in the Ministry of Education since quality of work is noticed. HR audits are mostly applied after every one year (mostly with staff establishment/headcount) in the Ministry and statistical approach has been the mostly applied HR audit approach though it does not help much on improving staff performance. The study also finds perception that audit is for finance as one of the main challenges of HR audit in the Ministry. Overall, according to the respondents' perception, the study argues that the contribution of HR audit to staff performance would have greatly improved if HR audit was frequently applied focusing on performance enhancement areas and MBO applied as an HR audit approach. The study has therefore recommended for the frequent application of HR audits like every quarter, and diversifies into other areas of human resource management. MBO as an HR audit approach should be applied frequently and the Ministry should also embark on training programs on HR audit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIAU	Central Internal Audit Unit
DHRMD	Department of Human Resource Management and Development
HR	Human Resources
HRA	Human Resource Audit
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRP	Human Resource Planning
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
MBO	Management by Objectives
MDA	Ministries Departments and Agencies
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
NAO	National Audit Office
OD	Organization Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study aimed at examining the respondents' perception on the linkage between human resource audits and performance of staff in the Malawi Ministry of Education Science and Technology. Human resource audit has been tested among other factors like employee qualification, organizational leadership, employee rewards, training and development, employee experience as independent variables that may lead to improved staff performance as well. Human resource audit as alluded to by Sharma, (2013), assesses the competency levels of the staff of the human resources department by assessing how well or how badly they performed their tasks and the net result of their actions. This net result of 'their' actions should, therefore, be reflected in the improved performance of individual employees.

Efficient and effective delivery of services to the public which is the concern for public administration is dependent on the performance of individual employees. Management is often asking, how are we doing, however, this is not an easy question to answer especially when it is difficult to obtain some type of objective measuring tool to determine how well a certain HR function is performing (Yadav and Dabhade, 2014:45) Proper management of human resources entails that there should be proper systems

designed and these systems should be examined, evaluated periodically to test their effectiveness, efficiency and impact to the organization. The Malawi Public Sector has been involved in human resource audits, a measurement mechanism on how human resource activities are implemented hence the need to examine the respondents' perception on the link between HR audits and performance of staff in the Ministry of Education.

This chapter introduces the topic, contextual background to the study, highlights problem statement, research questions, objectives, and justification of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

1.2.1 Human Resource Audit:

The basic objectives of a human resource audit is to measure how efficiently human resource functions are implemented by the HR department, to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the human resource systems, and to gain competitive advantage by rocketing effectiveness and efficiency of an organization (Durai, 2010, Richman, 2013, Saiyadain, 2009, cited in Ukil, 2015). In agreement to the above scholars Bratton and Gold (2001) cited in Sharma, (2013) argue that human resource audit can reduce costs and improve the human resource management information system. Shaban (2012) further alluded that human resource audit can be a useful tool and assistance for better and improved management controls which is possible by eliminating waste and avoiding breakdowns.

In the Malawi public sector, however, Department of Human Resource Management and Development, National Audit Office, Central Internal Audit Unit (CIAU), Local Government internal audit members of staff also conduct human resource audits in various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). According to the Internal Audit Charter, (2011), the mission of the internal audit service is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the civil service's operations. This mission of internal audit service resonates very well with the objectives of human resource audit. The Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD), conducts personnel audits through its Management Services Division under personnel audit section, and CIAU through its internal audit units domiciled in various Ministries and Departments. National Audit Office, DHRMD and Central Internal Audit Unit mainly are seen conducting headcount exercises in various Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

The Personnel audit section of the department (DHRMD) was formally known as Job inspection section under the then Department of Personnel Management and Training. The name changed from Job inspection to Personnel audit in 1998 and people who are now Personnel auditors or human resource auditors were known as Job inspectors (Simwaka, interviewed on 05/10/2016). The personnel audit section at DHRMD according to Simwaka, interviewed on 05/10/2016, has a total of 24 staff. The audits are mainly done to ensure that there are right people in right places and in right number to ensure productivity.

Management Services Division of the DHRMD through Personnel audit section set up a team of auditors and draw audit program on the same. In the program, auditors define objectives, scope, and methodology used. The outcome of the exercise is the report which is submitted to management and other oversight institutions recommending for solutions to the observed problems. Simwaka further reiterated that the focus of personnel audits is on the performance of employees as it looks into issues of quality and a right number of employees in right places.

1.3 Problem statement

According to Grindle (1997:481), public sector organizations perform poorly in many developing countries; in some cases, they barely function at all. Experience with macro-institutional initiatives has not "solved" the problem of poor performance, however macroeconomic policy reform cannot by itself foster the major changes in work attitudes, ethics, and organizational culture that are needed if significant performance improvements are to be realized (Grindle, 1997:481). In Malawi, the case for a well-functioning public service sector is a stark one (Durevall 2001:1). The views expressed by Durevall and Grindle above though noted some time back they still hold in the Malawian context. Report of the Sixth Commonwealth Forum of Heads of African Public Services on *Managing and Measuring Performance in the Public Service in Commonwealth Africa* (2009:21) alludes that the system (performance management system) in Malawi had several limitations as it did not serve any useful purpose of improving individual, team and organizational performance and that the system was not effectively implemented and had limited impact on improving overall performance.

This is also what necessitated the (2015) Public Sector Reforms program which in essence aims at improving the service delivery in the public sector. The Malawi Public Sector Report 2015 agrees to the fact that a well-functioning public sector is a stark one, meaning that performance of employees is a problem. According to MacDuffie (1995) there are basically three types of employee performance data available, which include qualitative (customer complaints, number of errors) or quantitative (customers served, units produced), measures of time (absence, lost working time, lateness and failure to meet deadlines) and financial indicators that consists of a large array of possibilities. In the same vein, the Malawi civil service until this time experience problem of absence lost working time, lateness and failure to meet deadlines as also highlighted in the Public Sector Reforms Report (2015).

It is a common knowledge to this effect that performance or actions of administrative staff affect the performance of technical personnel and problems of staff absenteeism, lateness, lost work time and failure to meet deadlines have not spared Malawi's Ministry of Education staff.

Malawi is offering poor and deteriorating quality education in primary schools as documented by the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) scores and national examination pass rates (World Bank Working Paper No. 182, 2010). The internal efficiency of the system is weak. The lack of qualified teaching staff in primary education is combined with a fairly incoherent distribution, reflecting the lack of efficient administrative management (World Bank Working Paper No. 182,

2010). Efficient administrative management is a function of good governance, and it is from this premise that this study aimed at examining the extent human resources audit (a good governance aspect) contributes to the improved performance of employees in Ministry of Education Science and Technology.

Ishrat and Habib (2012) conducted a study in India on the impact of Human resources audit on an Educational Institute in order to gain insight into the present scenario and future prospects. Sharma (2013) studied the Perceptions of Human resource professionals on Human resource audit. Shaban (2012) also did a study in Jordan on Auditing human resources as a method to evaluate the efficiency of Human resources functions and to control quality check on human resource activities. Dehaghani and Samea (2014) investigated the effect human resources management audit has on improving key outputs of the organization in Mobarakeh Steel Company in Iran while Genga (2014) studied on the perceived effect of human resource audit on the effectiveness of the human resource function at Alterrain service group Kenya limited in Kenya. Related to the topic of study, Moke and Muturi (2015) in Kenya studied effects of human resource audit on employee performance in secondary schools; Though Moke and Muturi attempted to investigate this effect of HR audit on the performance of employees, specific indicators of employee performance were not highlighted hence providing insights for further research.

The research gap widens as most of these researchers have not been able to examine in detail HR audit approaches which may have an impact on the net result of individual employee performance. The argument has been that compliance approach to human

resource audit as investigated by Moke and Muturi (2015) and others cannot be the only factor that can determine the performance of employees hence this study further examined other approaches of human resource audit and link them to employee performance. Most literature has not also been able to look into an issue of human resource audit challenges an element which has been considered in this study.

1.4 Research questions

1.4.1 Main research question

- i. To what extent does staff perceive there is a link between human resource audit and performance of staff in the Malawi Ministry of Education Science and Technology?

1.4.2 Specific research questions

- i. To what extent does the Ministry of Education undertake human resources audits
- ii. What are the benefits of human resource audits in the Ministry of Education
- iii. What are human resource audit approaches used by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology?
- iv. What challenges are faced in conducting human resource audit in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 Main objective

- i. To establish staff perception on the link between human resource audit and improved staff performance in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology

1.5.2 Specific objectives

- i. To examine the extent human resource audits are undertaken by the Ministry of Education
- ii. To determine the benefits of human resource audit in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology
- iii. To examine human resource audit approaches used by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology
- iv. To determine challenges that are faced in conducting human resource audits in the Ministry of Education

1.6 Justification of the study

The results of this study will be significant for several reasons. Firstly, it will add to the existing body of knowledge (literature). This is the case because issues of performance improvement or performance management have been talked a lot in literature but linking human resource audits to the improved performance of individual employees is limited. Besides, in the field of human resource management, scholars have indeed written quite a lot but coverage of human resources audit is far much below in most books as compared to most chapters on other topics despite its promises on the benefits to the organization.

Secondly, the study will assist policymakers in the field of human resource management particularly concerning performance improvement of employees to consider human resource audit as a mechanism on the same.

Thirdly, it will assist audit practitioners in the public sector realize too that just like finance and other areas, human resource management is an area worthy being audited hence giving their attention to it. In summary, issues to be examined in the study have been introduced, the background to the study given, problem statement, objectives, research questions, and justification highlighted in this chapter.

1.7 Conclusion

The chapter has presented the topic of study, contextual background, highlights the problem statement, research questions, objectives, and justification of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter defines key concepts which include human resource management, Human resource audit, and employee/staff performance. It highlights on what others studied and wrote in Africa and elsewhere on the benefits of HR audit, the extent to which HR audits are undertaken, approaches to human resources audit, and challenges associated with HR audit. Training and development, employee qualification, employee rewards, leadership and employee experience that may also have a stake in employee performance have also been highlighted. It also informs on the theoretical framework and conceptual framework through which the study is based.

2.2 Human Resource Management

Before defining human resource audit, it is important to understand what human resource management is so that a link can be drawn. Armstrong, (2009:4) defines human resource management as a strategic, integrated and coherent approach to the employment, development and well-being of the people working in organizations. Mahapatro, (2010:3) looks at Human resource management as part of management concerned with all the decisions, strategies, factors, principles, operations, practices, functions, activities and methods related to the management of people as employees in any type of organization.

The two scholars recognize the fact that human resource management is an aspect of management but focusing mainly on people working in the organization who are termed as employees. On the other hand, Bach (2005) argues that HRM as a subject of study assumes that the interests of employees and employers will coincide and is preoccupied with the end goal of organizational effectiveness that marginalizes the interests of other stakeholders such as employees. Torrington et al (2008), in their HRM roles and objectives model highlight staffing, performance, administration and change management as roles and objectives of human resource management. At the centre of it all, human resource management is concerned with the performance of individual employees, as well as teams to achieve a common goal.

2.3 Human Resource Audit

Before defining human resource audit, what is 'audit'. As noted by Agata (2015), an audit is an extremely broad topic area and the main aim of an audit is to provide information. The word audit comes from Latin verb *audire* which means to listen. Listening implies an attempt to know the state of the affairs as they exist. (www.whatishumanresource.com/human resource auditing, viewed 6th November 2016)

The audit is a systematic activity in order to assess a person, an organization, a system, a process, a project or a product. The purpose of the audit is to express an opinion about a person, organization, a system etc. in terms of evaluation, based on done work for a test (Clifton et al., 2004, in Dehaghani and Samea, 2014:134). The audit could improve quality of performance of human resources (Dehaghani and Samea, 2014:134).

Human resource audit, therefore, evaluates the activities of the human resources department to see whether they are really bearing fruits (Thomson, 2002). The first stage in developing a plan for your area of responsibility involves analyzing the skills and knowledge already available to you amongst the people already working for you, sometimes called a Human Resource Audit (Thomson, 2002). According to functions Mahapatro, (2010) human resource audit is a process of examining policies, procedures, documentation, systems, and practices with respect to an organization's human resources. A human resource audit is a methodical process that aims to investigate the underlying policies, strategies, systems, techniques, documents, functions, and practices of an organization with respect to its human resource management (Ukil, 2015). Mahapatro and Ukil are missing a very important element in their definitions as they fail to highlight that the outcome of human resource audit is to improve performance, efficiency and effectiveness. This is the case because after examining and investigating policies the next step is to recommend changes for improvement. Human resource audit assesses the competency levels of the staff of the HR department by assessing how well or how badly they performed their tasks and the net result of their actions (Sharma, 2013:43). The net result of their actions can also be linked to the performance of employees and employee performance as argued by Ali (2013), is the accomplished works.

Human resource audit is more clearly defined also as a method to evaluate the efficiency of human resource at all levels throughout the organization, in order to ascertain whether sound management prevails throughout, and to recommend its effectiveness where such is not the case (Werther and Davis, 1996, in Shaban, 2012:123). The last two definitions

augur well with the purpose of this study as they recognize that human resource audit aims at gauging the performance of employees as its net result. Yadav and Dabhade, (2014:46-47) offer five different components of HR audit which include; functional audit, service audit, compliance audit, financial audit and strategic audit. According to the scholars, functional audit looks into most of the HRM functions like HRP, performance management systems, selection and staffing, training and development, career development among others. Service audit looks into issues like assessment of the knowledge of HR staff while compliance audit on the degree to which HR is compliant with relevant legislation. Financial audit within HR audit looks on issues of efficiency of the various HR functions while strategic audit examines whether HR strategy, policies and process are aligned with and support the achievement of the business.

The five components of HR audit offered by Yadav and Dabhade encompass a lot of dimensions and in line with the purpose of the study as they are tilted towards improving the performance of employees. Audit of human resources management means systematic analysis and evaluation of efficiency and productivity (Gallie, 2003 in Dehaghani and Samea, 2014:134). Human resources audit measures human resource outputs and effectiveness under the given circumstances and the degree of utilization of human resource skills (Moke and Muturi, 2015:83). It is still not known whether promises made through these definitions are true on the ground. The argument is that most performance assessments do not recognize human resource audit as the catalyst for improving performance too hence need for further inquiry.

According to Abouzar and Asghar, (2009), Human resource audit is not new; it has been used in strategic thinking literature for many years. In recent years, however, the human resource audit has been translated into what has been called an evaluation of an employee (Kaplan & Norton, 2010 in Moke and Muturi, 2015:84). In a similar vein, Ali, (2013:53) argues that effective personnel evaluation system is the significant aspect to enhance performance and efficiency of civil servants. In the views of Ali, performance can only be seen to have been improved if those solutions/recommendations have been adopted. Laurdan Associates Inc (2008) offers opportunities for the survival of HR audit as it highlights three factors like global economy, failure of the financial industry to adequately assess risks, and increasing stakeholder initiatives. This suggests that HR audit has come to stay taking advantage of the prevailing economic problems which some economic models have failed to solve.

The point is that if finances and other resources are being mismanaged, it is people who mismanage them hence the need to audit those HR systems so as to have people who can ably handle such issues properly. If organizations are not ticking, corruption prevails, facing all sorts of performance related problems it is mostly because of the people working in them, hence invest in HR audit.

2.4 Staff or employee performance

The words staff performance and employee performance have been used interchangeably in this study. Performance is associated with a quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence/ attendance on the job, the efficiency of the work completed [and] effectiveness of work completed" (Mathis & Jackson 2009 cited in Thao

and Hwang). Employee Performance is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individuals, as set, and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards (Thao and Hwang). Employee performance is a complex mix of skills, knowledge, ability, attitude, effort and results (NSW, Industrial relations, 2013:1). Concurring with *NSW paper* on effort and results, Ali (2013:59) argues that performance of civil servants is the accomplished works. Employee/staff performance in this study has been explained in terms of reduced absenteeism, quality of work, reduced disciplinary cases, and reduced costs as well as, the commitment of staff to duty.

2.5 Benefits of human resource audit

Conducting an HR audit regularly and routinely can ensure employee discipline, commitment and increase efficiency (Ukil, 2015). According to Mahapatro, (2010:222) very typically, small to medium-size companies realize almost instant cost savings once an audit is complete and changes are implemented. Unlike Ukil, Mahapatro brings in an objective reasoning that human resource audit cannot improve performance unless changes are implemented, in other words, unless recommendations are adopted. The suggestive model of research by freedman test, adopted by Dehaghani and Samea (2014) in their study, *investigating the effect human resources management audit on improving key outputs of organization*, among other factors found that enhancing quality of product, satisfaction of customer about product, impact on profit amount after implementing audit of human resources management.

According to Bratton and Gold (2001) cited in Sharma, (2013:42) the human resource audit can reduce costs and improve the human resource management information system. The idea of human resource audit improving human resource information system is also questionable in the Malawian context as we have witnessed a paradox of HR information (varied information) in the civil service particularly on staffing amidst HR audits. Mahapatro, (2010) argued that mere existence of the corporate audit team encourages compliance and self-audits by the regional offices between visits. Though this might be true there is an element of instilling fear here, HR audit having the power to instil fear in the minds of regional offices employees as put it by Mahapatro.

According to Shaban (2012:122), human resource audit can be a useful tool and assistance for better and improved management controls which is possible by eliminating waste, avoiding breakdowns. In this context, it can still be argued that how does management realize that it is human resource audit that contributes to such improvements. Mahapatro (2010) is in essence, summarizing such views as to argue that audit of human resource could help in finding out the efficiency of every segment, but arguably, the efficiency of every segment can only be done if recommendations are adopted. Ponmalar and Punitha (2014:295) also argue that legislation affecting all human resources is constantly involving and the legal ramifications of noncompliance impact the HR department, organizations and its employees.

In an HR audit study by Shiri (2012), 90% of the respondents agreed that the safety aspects and legal compliance had improved because of HR audit which led to transparency in HR department. The same study (Shiri) also found that HR audit helped

in decreasing HR cost and developing HR strategies, increasing clarity of thought and sense of direction. Ponmalar and Punitha (2014:295) in their study on *Challenges to HR audit in Hospitals administration in the 21st century* found that the results of HR audits help to improve performance levels to the stakeholders of the hospital. In contrary view to the consensus raised above by various scholars, a paper on ‘Human Resource Audit’, (www.whatishumanresource.com/human_resource_auditing, viewed 6th November, 2016) argue that HR audits are not routine practices aimed at problem-solving, instead of directly solving problems HR audits like financial audits help in providing insights into possible causes for current and future problems. The paper also cites some circumstances that necessitate HR audit like felt concern by top management and compulsion of the external forces. Arguably, these situations imply that things have already gone wrong hence trying to cure instead of preventing problems. This could be the weakness of HR audit despite its many promises on the benefits, in other words, reservations on HR audit benefits.

It can also be argued that by providing insights into possible causes for problems, it means improving systems and performance of staff. Mahalingam (2014) argues that the HR audit system is very much helpful to face the challenges and to increase the potentiality of employees in the organization. HR audit helps in increasing quality and productivity of the work (Yadav and Dabhade 2014). The other advantages include the professionalization of HRM policy, stimulating the consistency of policies, optimizing labour cost (Agata, 2015). The scholar further asserts that the greatest benefit that the audits offer to the employees is the opportunity to acquire a thorough knowledge of their

own skills and competencies, as well as their strengths that should be developed, and the weaknesses that ought to be eliminated. Though some scholars have reservations about HR audits, most of them seem to agree that HR audits bring with it a lot of benefits to both employees and the organization hence, Shiri (2012) argues that HR Audit is very much helpful to face the challenges and to increase the potentiality of the HR personnel in the organization.

2.6 Extent human resource audits are undertaken

Auditing is mainly rooted in the field of finance. This means that when one hears of an auditor coming, the first thing that comes to mind is who has misappropriated funds here? The truth of the matter is that an auditor can be anybody, in every field including human resource management. The above thinking is even supported by the literature, as according to Campbell et al., 2002, p. 49 cited in Ukil, 2015) limited companies are bound by law to conduct formal financial audits; the programs concerning people are hardly given the same measure. In agreement with Campbel and friends, Yadav and Dabhade (2014), alluded that HR function is often overlooked for audits/measurement tools, to assess its effectiveness and legal regulatory compliance. It is clear that studies in the HR audit sector are very limited (Durai and Adaikalasamy, 2014). Human resource audits are non-routine and may be designed to cater to the unique needs of the organization at a particular point in time ([www.whatishumanresource.com/human resource auditing](http://www.whatishumanresource.com/human-resource-auditing), viewed 6th November 2016). Mahalingam (2014) after discovering that HR audits are rarely done recommended that an organization should conduct HR audit twice in a year. The Malawi Internal Audit Charter (2011) also vindicates the views

of the above scholars as it does not emphasize an aspect of human resource audit in its clauses. The argument that can be advanced to all these synonymous viewpoints concerns the fact that risks associated with human resources may be are not felt immediately.

As argued above, HR audits are not regulated, and not standardized. The above scholars seem to agree that human resource audits are rarely done but the point is that HR audits might be traced back as early as financial audits only that approaches and standards might not be advanced. However, Phillips et al, 2001, p.5, cited in Ukil, (2015) bring in another argument that although the concept of HR audit brought into the timeline in 1980's, the practices of HR audit has already started boosting substantially, and Olalla and Castillo, (2002) concur with Phillips and friends that all of the functions and competencies of HR auditing are being progressively expanded.

Audit need not be exhaustive, but should be focused on particular function of HRM such as Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation, etc. (Shiri, 2012). Shiri suggests that HR audit covers a broad area within human resource field and not just say pay related issues as the scholar continues to agree, all the HR functions such as performance appraisal, training and development etc. are fine-tuned as a result of HR audit. Invariably, a study by Yadav and Dabhade (2014) found that in some cases it is found that employers are not making sufficient investment in auditing the implementation of policies. This study concurs with the views of many scholars that HR audits are not routine activities, as Sharma (2013) in a related also reported that frequency of external HR audit is very less, as 60% of the organizations had it only 0-3 times in last 10years.

2.7 Human resource audit approaches

Several scholars' works are synonymous on the five human resource audit approaches. Such approaches include comparative approach, statistical, compliance, outside side authority approach and management by objective approach. As noted by Shaban (2012), auditors may adopt any of the five approaches for the purpose of evaluation, however, some of these approaches have been criticized under this section as this study relates HR audit to employee performance, and hence, HR audit approaches are not exempted.

2.7.1 Compliance approach

According to Mahapatro (2010:219) compliance approach is the review of past practices, to determine if actions taken followed legal requirements, company policies, and procedure. Rothwell and Kazanas (2003:141) argue that compliance approach assumes that department is responsible for ensuring organizational compliance with laws, rules and regulations. Auditors review past actions to determine if those activities comply with legal requirements and company policies and procedures (Shaban, 2012). Auditors create checklists of governmental requirements applicable to the firm and then compare actual practices/policies to those required by law (Rothwell and Kazanas, 2003). Dehaghani and Samea (2014) in their model of Human resource audit call this approach 'follow the law'. Compliance with the legal provisions is particularly important as any violation makes the management guilty of an offence Shaban, (2012:124). Most of the scholar's views are based on this approach in their work as if it is the only approach. This is mainly based on the premise that auditing is rooted in the concept of compliance to laws and procedures. Even most of the HR audits conducted within or outside Malawi are based on

compliance. The disadvantage to this approach, if wholly adopted is that if policies, laws, procedures are outdated such an audit cannot serve any purpose. The strength that this approach has is that it recognizes that in any organizational setting, there are rules of the game which must be adhered to if the set goals are to be achieved. It can be argued that it is still doubtful if this approach contributes to improved performance of staff in organizations, or if it does to what extent. More in-depth analysis has to be done on other approaches to this effect as well.

2.7.2 Comparative approach

In terms of comparative approach, Mahapatro (2010) states that another division or company that has better practices or results chosen as the model, the audit team then compares audited firms results with the best practices of the model organization. Conducting an audit involves a review of current practices, policies and procedures and may include benchmarking against organizations of similar size and or industry (Yadav and Dahbade, 2014:1). As pointed out by Rothwell and Kazanas (2013), a discrepancy is any variation between what HR departments in other organizations are doing and what this department is doing. This approach can work better if indeed there is an element of homogeneity between the two organizations or departments but such audits are not common in the public sector. This is, of course, a difficult task as it requires proper understanding of the model organization/department in every aspect as issues of culture, climate and environment can affect the performance of staff despite both of them being governed by the same policies. Although benefits can be accrued from this approach, it is still doubtful as to what extent this approach is applied in the public sector organizations

in Malawi. Comparison for the purposes of bringing needed change is good of course but much needed change can only come if several factors have been taken into account.

2.7.3 Statistical approach

According to Shaban (2012), statistical approach relates to absenteeism and turnover. Mahapatro (2010:219) points out that from the existing records the audit team generates the statistical standards against which activities and programs are evaluated. According to Rothwell and Kazanas, (2013), under statistical approach, a team of HR specialists from inside and/or outside the organization examines ratios or measures and that such ratios or measures focus on performance (for example, unit labour costs per unit of output), satisfaction (for example, employee satisfaction with specific HR programs), turnover, absenteeism, or accident rates. This can also be a challenging approach as it requires gathering evidence of the problematic areas before the exercise. The problem with this approach is that one may just conclude that HR system are not working before going for the actual audit, since you already have evidence through hard data.

2.7.4 Outside authority approach

Dehaghani and Samea (2014) in their model of Human resource audit call this approach as ‘Ratings for foreign documents’. Standards set by a consultant or taken from published research findings serve as the benchmark for the audit team (Mahapatro, 2010:219). This relies on a consultant's opinion of the state of the art methods regardless of their prevalence in the industry (Rothwell and Kazanas, 2003:142). As the two scholars further argue that in this context, a discrepancy is any variation between what the HR department is doing and what the consultant believes it should be doing. The problem with this

approach is that it is dependent on consultant's knowledge in the area of analysis. The point is that if the consultant is not well versed in that area he/she can mislead and misinterpret results. Like in comparative approach, this also requires understanding of culture, environment, and climate on the part of the consultant before execution of the exercise because organizations operate in different dynamics.

2.7.5 Management by Objectives (MBO)

Management by objectives is a process of managing performance by focusing on the accomplishment of well-defined objectives rather than on tasks and activities (Dzimhiri, 2009). Dzimhiri provides a reasonable argument in his definition as there has always been a misconception of achieving an objective. Many understand objectives in the context of tasks and activities but Dzimhiri (2009) seem to suggest that achieving organizational performance is much more than just outlining the activities that one has undertaken but the outcome of those activities as well. Under management by objective approach, Shaban, (2012:126) argues that the audit team researches the actual performance and compares it with the previous set objectives. What this means is that prior to human resources audit, performance standards or targets are supposed to be set which are later evaluated to check whether they have been achieved hence management by objectives. Ponmalar and Punitha (2014:295) alluded that HR auditing involves a regular and systematic examination of organizational practices and accomplishments via organizational objectives. In terms of HR audit in the context of management by objectives, a study by Sharma (2013) highlights that HR audit aims to encourage professional managers and executives to develop their own ways of measuring

performance against targets and objections developed from the experience and needs of their own particular unit, department and section. MBO views achievement of objectives as strength and non-achievement as weakness (Rothwell and Kazanas, 2013). HR audit in this case is indeed understood as management by objective and this approach seems to be promoted nowadays as it is evident in most performance management systems of most organizations but it is not understood in the context of HR audit. In my view, a combination of two to three approaches that among them include MBO should be promoted when conducting HR audits.

2.8 Challenges faced in conducting HR audit

As already noted, audit concept is rooted in finance more than any other type of audit mainly because of the immediate risks that are spotted in finance. The term human resource auditing borrows its title and rationale from accountancy, it also makes use of the system and methods of the social and scientific information, Sharma (2013). Following this school of thought, it can also be argued that HR audit's lack of popularity might be caused by lack of auditing skills in HR as most staff trained in auditing mostly have the finance background (accountancy). The human resource auditors must be individuals of high integrity and knowledge (Durai, 2010, p. 2010, cited in Ukil, 2015), well trained and capable of conducting HR audit. Mahalingam (2014) recommended for better awareness among employees regarding HR audit after discovering that the system is not widely practiced. Taking it from the fact that auditing is rooted in finance, HR auditing becomes the challenge because most auditors might not have requisite knowledge in HR hence compromise on the quality of audit assignments. Rothwell and

Kazanas, (2003) further argued that HR auditors can come from inside the HR department, from the organization outside the department, from outside the organization, or from some combination of these sources.

This issue of coming from HR department inside the organization is problematic since you can't audit your own activities if you want to uphold the principle of independence. On the other hand, an aspect of coming from outside the organization will not be in line with the need for the auditors to be of good knowledge of the organization. However, it is a good aspect that ensures independence (outside authority approach). Ponmalar and Punitha (2014) in their paper on *Challenges to HR audit in Hospital administration in 21st century* among others also highlighted some challenges which include labour demanding standards of employment and working conditions and ethical issues. These scholars called these challenges as administrative abilities, and augur well with some arguments raised under comparative and outside authority approach to HR audit. The issue of lack of legal support to conduct HR audits as argued above also acts as a challenge in conducting HR audit assignments.

It is a relatively common occurrence for the audits to be mistakenly regarded as a form of company control, which often arouses negative emotions among the staff and the fear that some disturbing irregularities and malpractices might be discovered (Agata, 2015). The point raised by Agata here is the problem of fear which is always associated with HR audits; employees are afraid of change, as an inevitable consequence of the audit process as the scholar further argues. Agata's views above seem to agree with those of Mahalingam (2014) who points out that such fear is due to misinformation or lack of

knowledge of the audit objectives, which requires better awareness. A study by Sharma (2013) found that 60% of the professionals consider that the external auditor must have expertise in integrated HR systems, experience in HR systems implementation as a consultant or as an executive, organization diagnosis and OD skills, Knowledge of the business and HR strategies, prior experience in audit. This suggests that HR audit lacks people who understand issues of both HR as well as general auditing techniques. Another aspect is that audit could be a concept rooted in finance and supporting this argument, Sherer and Kent 1983 (cited in Genga, 2014), states that while the audit function may have emerged originally to monitor one specific type of accountability relationship, the expansion in the scope of auditing and the adoption of modes of operation can be viewed as response to a broader interpretation of accountability. The scholar further argues that audit is therefore characterized as a monitor mechanism within the accountability process. The accountability aspect in this case, in the eyes of many, is understood in the context of financial management.

2.9 Other performance enhancement factors

2.9.1 Employee qualification

Staff performance has also always been linked to the qualification of individual employees. In other words, employee performance is dependent on qualifications hence just like HR audit, measurement has been done to determine its level of importance on the same. In an outline of the person specification aspects when recruiting, Armstrong (2009) highlights qualification as one of the important factors to consider and mention that professional, technical or academic qualifications are the requirements that a

candidate should have undertaken. An organization where employees are much valued for their high-education, knowledge, qualification, skills and experience, the best employee can perform is the best they are motivated (Hwang and Theo). According to research, it is thanks to audits that the employees tend to move into more prestigious positions, they become more involved in their work and they are highly motivated to develop their skills, qualifications and full capacities (Agata, 2015). Determinants of performance may be such as “declarative knowledge”, “procedural knowledge” and “motivation” (McCloy et al., 1994, cited in Hwang and Thao). The argument is that qualification is still a factor in staff performance improvement because it predicts somebody's performance.

2.9.2 Employee experience

Employee experience has always been associated with improving staff performance as well hence the need to measure the extent with HR audit. Experience is associated with an employee acquiring more knowledge about the job such that he or she is able to perform without problems. Most of the knowledge acquired by an employee that amounts to experience is by doing the actual job. Armstrong (2009:516) defines experience as the types of achievements and activities that would be likely to predict success. Armstrong understands this aspect of experience as a component of person specification important in recruitment and selection. Employee experience can also be linked to the management of knowledge and intellectual capital to the success of the business and in this case as an HRM practice area, Armstrong (2010) argues that there is need to ensure that vital stocks of knowledge are retained and improve the flow of knowledge, information and learning

within the organization. The goal of having well experienced and knowledgeable people in the organization is to ensure improved performance for the continuity of business and provision of quality service.

2.9.3 Training and development

Training has always been linked to leading to improved staff performance. According to Sims (2002) employee training can be defined as a planned attempt to facilitate employee learning of job-related knowledge, skills, and behaviours or helping them correct deficiencies in their performance, while development is an effort to provide employees with the skills needed for both present and future jobs. In this study, training and development have been combined as a factor that can contribute to the improved performance of staff. This paper does not provide detailed discussion on training and development hence it just argues that training and development has been a component of staff performance improvement plan. Training has been proven to generate performance improvement related benefits for the employee as well as for the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behaviour (Appiah 2010; Harrison 2000; Guest 1997, cited in Hwang and Thao). It is also thanks to the personnel audit that the employees are provided with the unique opportunity to motivate themselves to further professional development through the participation in effective trainings (Agata, 2015).

2.9.4 Employee rewards

This is an aspect associated with staff motivation. It can also be argued that rewards leads to the improved staff performance but to what extent. This aspect has also been subjected to other factors as highlighted above to see its relative contribution to employee performance with HR audit. As argued by Armstrong and Murlis, (2207) rewards management deals with the design, implementation and maintenance of reward processes and practices that are geared to the improvement of organizational, team and individual performance. Rewards in this case constitute all other motivation related issues which even includes compensation package, and even recognition as Armstrong and Murlis (2007) put it, ‘the notion of total reward says that there is more to rewarding people than throwing money at them’.

Torrington et al (2008) argue that a change in perspective away from a narrow focus on payment towards a broader focus on ‘total reward’ has come about largely because of developments in the commercial environment. In this study, the term employee reward has been understood in the context of this total rewards which Torrington et al (2008) in their model highlight this aspect of total reward in four categories of the individual (basic pay) transactional (health care), communal (recognition) and relational (career development). Thomson (2002) groups these rewards into two main groups of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Employers who want their workforces to be positively engaged with their work, to participate in continuous improvement programs and to work beyond contract when required must have in place a reward package, as argued by Torrington and friends.

2.9.5 Leadership

For staff performance to improve it also depends on the organizational leadership or management commitment. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group (Lyne de ver, 2009). Lyne de ver, therefore, provides basic conceptions of leadership to this end which among others include; leadership as an art of inducing compliance, exercising influence, and as an instrument of goal achievement. In the same line of thinking, Northouse, 2007, cited in Thao and Hwang, alluded that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals while Leadership style is the combination of attitude and behavior of a leader, which leads to certain patterns in dealing with the followers (Dubrin, 2004, in Thao and Hwang). Leadership within an organization has a bearing on encouraging or inhibiting employee's performance (Armstrong & Murlis 2004; Cronje et al 2001, cited in Hwang and Thao). Human Resource Audit, therefore, as an aspect perceived to help improve staff performance as argued in literature has been tested along with the above factors as well to examine its relative contribution to performance in the presence of these factors.

2.10 Summary and conclusions of the related studies

Ishrat and Habib (2012) conducted a study in India on the Impact of Human resources Audit on an Educational Institute in Order to Gain Insight into the Present Scenario and Future Prospects. The study aimed at finding out whether existing systems and procedures are yielding desired result. According to these researchers the major learning

as part of conclusion are; Human Resource audit helps to link the long term purpose, goals and objectives of the HR function/HR plans.

Sharma (2013) studied the Perceptions of HR professionals on HR audit. Some of the findings are that the frequency of external HR audit is very less, and the Focus of HR audit is on audit of the financial management of HR, and in terms of involvement of cross functional teams for HR audit is a task force comprising of cross functional team of employees. Shaban (2012) also did a study in Jordan on Auditing Human Resources as a Method to Evaluate the Efficiency of Human Resources Functions and to Control Quality Check on HR Activities. The study concluded that audit can be used as a measure to evaluate the personnel activities, climate, and compliance of an organization's policies.

Dehaghani and Samea (2014) investigated the effect human resources management audit has on improving key outputs of organization in Mobarakeh Steel Company in Iran. The study concluded that audit of human resources impacts on key outputs of organization.

Genga (2014) studied on the perceived effect of human resource audit on the effectiveness of the human resource function at Alterrain service group Kenya limited in Kenya. Researcher tried to cover a good number of HR standards having being improved as a result of human resource audits but the focus was not on employee performance. The researcher used five point Likert scale, with a very small sample hence.

2.11 Theoretical framework

The study utilized Human resources management audit process model by Eagle, (2003), adapted from Dehaghan and Samea (2014). This model highlights that effective human resource audits in functional human resource management areas through human resource audit approaches leads to desired outcomes like cost-effectiveness, competency and commitment which later feeds into the achievement of the strategic organizational goals.

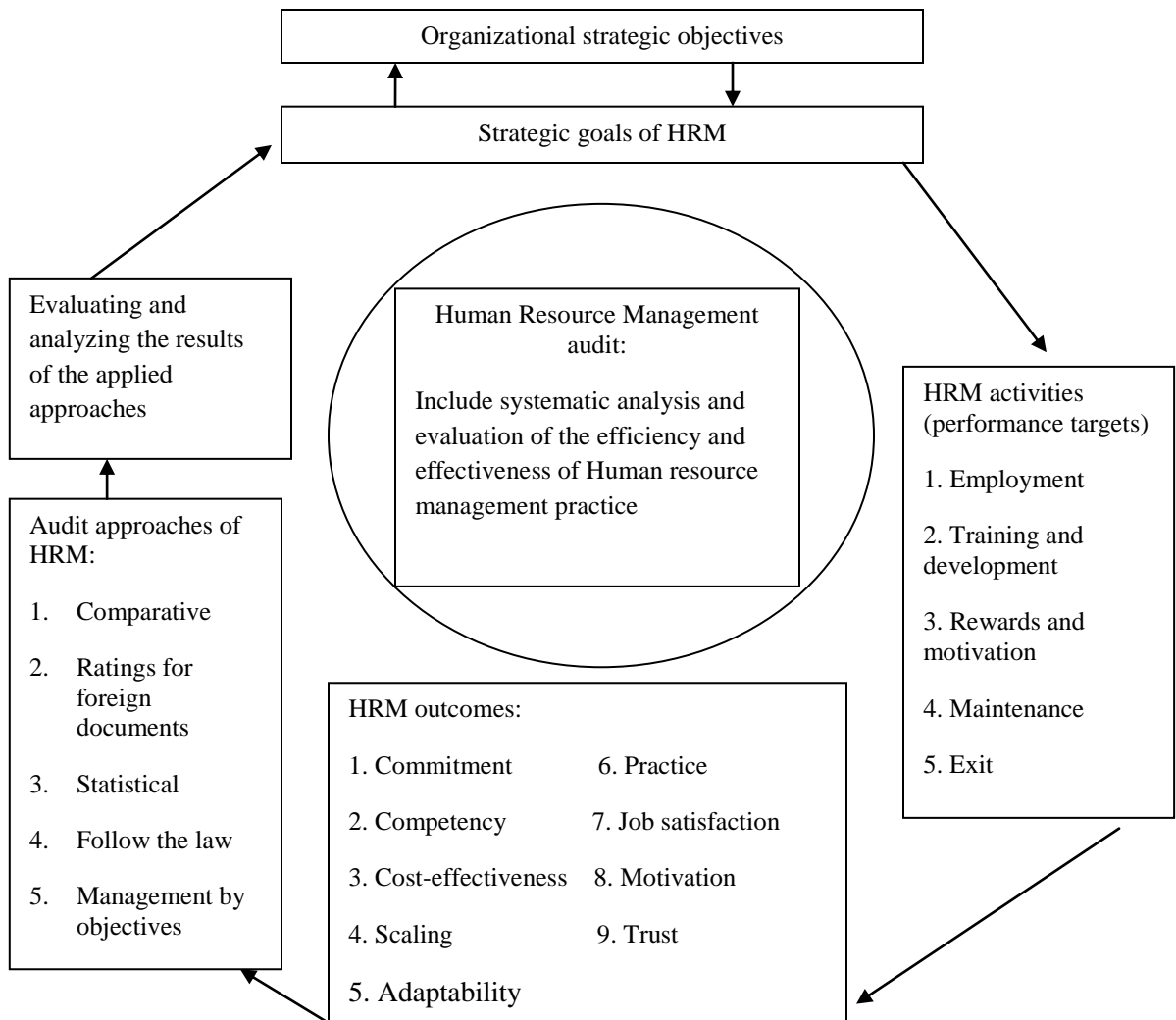


Figure 2.1: Human Resource Management Audit Process

Source: Eagle, (2003) adapted from Dehaghani and Samea (2014)

This theory is in line with the study as it highlights the importance of HR audit that the overall objective is to achieve the organizational strategic goals. Organizational strategic goals cannot be achieved without an improved performance of individual employees which the above model is emphasizing. The framework clearly highlights human resource management activities which need to be audited through various HR audit approaches to achieve HRM outcomes which feed into organizational goals. By HR audit being at the center, the framers of this model are suggesting that HR audit is at the center of ensuring that both HRM as well as organizational goals are achieved. The main components of this model which will further be analyzed are the HRM activities, HRM outcome and the HR audit approaches hence this research was largely built in this framework.

2.12 Conceptual framework



Figure: 2.2: Conceptual framework

Source: Developed by the Researcher

Employee performance is the dependent variable while human resources audit the independent variable which has been tested along with other factors like leadership, employee rewards, employee qualifications, employee experience, training and development to see its (HR audit) relative contribution to performance in presence of these factors. The argument according to the conceptual framework that has been developed is that HR audit leads to improved performance. According to this framework, it is perceived that HR audit is not a magic bullet on its own that can positively impact on the performance of employees without other factors in play. The framework, therefore, recognizes this aspect as it includes these other factors (intervening) as having an influence on improving staff performance.

2.13 Chapter summary

In summary, concepts like employee performance, human resource audit have been introduced; benefits of HR audits, HR audit approaches, the extent to which HR audits are undertaken as well as challenges of HR auditing have been highlighted. Terms of training, leadership, employee rewards, qualification and experience have also been highlighted. Literature promises more on the benefits of HR audit which needs to be examined empirically. Theoretical, as well as conceptual frameworks have also been introduced and explained.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design that includes research approach, study population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection tools, data analysis tools. It also highlights on validity, reliability and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research approach

This research takes a quantitative approach as it has solely dependent on primary data sourced through the questionnaire. Quantitative research is a type of research explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (Creswell, 1994, in Sukamolson). Involves the generation of data in a quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion, and this approach can be further sub-classified into inferential, experimental and simulation approaches to research (Kothari, 2004). The key issue in quantitative approach is the rigorous analysis of data in a numerical form using statistical packages. However, Allwood (2011) argues that any phenomenon has both a qualitative and a quantitative aspect in the sense that it can be categorized and that it has some degree of much-ness. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena, that is to say, it aims to help us to

understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way they are (Hancock et al, 2009).

3.3 Study Population

The study considered various strata from the Ministry of Education's non-teaching (Managerial, Administrative/Support) staff from the Ministry Headquarters and other satellite offices of the Ministry and Personnel audit staff from the DHRMD. These categories of respondents have been considered so as to ensure uniformity of information across strata as the population has further been partitioned into managerial and middle-class employees. Internal auditors of the Ministry have also been treated as another stratum of the population, and data from personnel audit staff from DHRMD has also been sought. The total population of the study is 98 and this includes strata from the administration (managerial positions) and DHRMD personnel audit staff.

3.4 Sample size

Ministry of Education Science and Technology Headquarters, satellite offices and DHRMD's Personnel audit staff according to the staff lists (2016) have a total of 98 non-teaching (managerial) staff positions of middle to top management positions. Out of this population, includes Directors and Deputy Directors, grade D and E, Chief Officers and Principal Officers, grade F and G, and other positions like I, and J. The population includes staff from Administration, Human resource management, Information Technology, Internal Audit, and other departments and these have been included in the study as it is assumed that they understand issues of HR audit better than other groups.

Personnel auditors from DHRMD were also targeted as these officers discharge their duties in various Ministries and departments which Ministry of Education Science and Technology is not an exception. A representative sample of 74 respondents from the population with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error were arrived at using the Sample Size Calculator table developed by the Research Advisors.

3.5 Sampling technique

The study follows probability, stratified random sampling where the Ministry of Education Science and Technology's managerial positions, middle-class employees have been sampled from Human resource management department, Administration, Internal Audit as well as other technical departments with a focus on managerial staff. The inclusion of these administrative groups has been done because it is assumed that they understand issues surrounding HR audit better than other groups. Stratified sampling technique has been used because as Trochim (2006:2) elucidates, it assures that you will be able to represent not only the overall population but also key subgroups of the population. Trochim (2006:3) further asserts that stratified random sampling will generally have more statistical precision than simple random sampling. This is, in essence, the use of key informants and in this case, subgroups like HR personnel, staff members from administration department, internal audit section, as well as other technical departments targeting decision-making carders were considered.

3.6 Data collection tools

The study has mainly utilized primary data but with a few cases of secondary data. For the primary data, the questionnaire has been the main tool for data collection targeting 74 participants from various administrative sections. Review of various documents like reports, policy documents, manuals, and other documented information has been the main mechanism for secondary data collection which also covers issues of HR audit frequency, benefits and challenges. The Likert scale has mostly been utilized in the questionnaire with some cases of follow-up questions.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis tools used to bring results in this study include; Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Tables, charts, graph, on frequencies, cross-tabulations; have been generated using these tools. This means that descriptive statistics has been utilized mostly. Content analysis of the data that was generated through follow-up (probing) questions in the questionnaire has been done as well where similar answers exactly, or inferred have been grouped to arrive at their frequencies. These are open-ended questions following closed-ended ones.

3.8 Validity and reliability

Krishnaswamy et al. (2009), as cited in Moke and Muturi (2015) contend that validity is the degree to which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. Krishnaswamy et al. (2009), further point out that the usual procedure in assessing the content validity of a measure is to use a professional or an expert in a

particular field. Similarly, an expert in the field of study/supervisor was engaged and key informants like personnel auditors from DHRMD, HR professionals, and internal auditors from central internal audit have been utilized. Reliability refers to the consistency and stability with which an instrument measure and supplies consistent results (Krishnaswamy et al. 2009, in Moke and Muturi, 2015). Krishnaswamy and friends noted that reliability can be assessed using the test-retest method. Under this aspect, this study piloted the questionnaire administration for a few respondents at Ministry of Health and Central Internal Audit for the reliability of methods and data.

3.9 Ethical considerations

As noted by Saunders et al, (2007), ethical concerns will emerge as you plan your research, seek access to organizations and to individuals, collect, analyze and report your data. In the context of research, ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by it (Saunders et al, 2007). Ethical considerations in this study include anonymity and confidentiality of respondents, seeking informed consent from respondents and also ensuring the privacy of respondents.

3. 10 Study limitations

Some respondents were not able to respond to some questions especially brainstorming questions; hence this could to some extent impact negatively on the results of the study.

The study mainly utilized Ministry of Education Science and Technology as the case study in the public sector, but there are so many public sector organizations in Malawi

hence the study was limited to one only. There was a need for a larger sample, therefore, with respondents drawn from various Ministries and not just one or two.

3. 11 Chapter summary

In summary, the research design has been done, issues of study approach, which is quantitative, a population which include administrative or non-teaching staff have been highlighted. A sample size of 74 participants, sampling technique which is random stratified data collection and data analysis techniques have been explained too.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings and discussion of the study. The results were guided by the specific study objectives which include; to examine the extent human resource audits are undertaken in the Ministry, to determine the benefits of human resource audit in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, to examine human resource audit approaches applied by the Ministry and to determine challenges that are faced in conducting human resource audits in the Ministry.

4.2 Social-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Out of the targeted sample of 74, 65 (n=65) responded to the questionnaire, representing 87% response rate. Demographic characteristics of the respondents considered in this study include gender, grade at work, level of education, and years in service. The grades have been categorized into three groups of lower grades of K to I, (Technician to an Officer) senior category of grade G to E, (Principal Officer, Chief Officer, to Assistant Director) and the most senior category of D to A (Deputy Director, Director, to Principal Secretary). Years in service for the respondents have also been grouped into three categories. The first category is the one where respondents have worked for the period of

less than a year to 10 years. The second category is for 11 to 20 years and the third one is where respondents have worked for 20 years and above. These demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in the table below.

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of Study Participants (n = 65)

CHARACTERISTIC	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	Male	39	60
	Female	26	40
Department	Administration	9	14
	Human Resource	25	38
	Internal Audit and accounts	15	23
	Other Managerial	16	24
Level of Education	J.C.E	1	1.5
	M.S.C.E	2	3
	College Certificate	2	3
	Diploma	20	31
	Bachelor's Degree	17	26
	Master's Degree	22	33.8
	PhD	1	1.5
Number of Years in Service	Less than 10 years	25	38.5
	10-20 years	13	20
	21 years above	27	41.5
Grade	K – I	37	56.9
	G – E	27	41.5
	D – A	1	1.54

In terms of frequency of gender of respondents, 60% were males while 40% were females. On the education of the respondents, 33.8% of all the respondents hold Masters Degrees followed by 31.5% who hold Diplomas and 26% Bachelor's Degrees. Those holding PhDs, College certificates and just secondary education certificate were less than 8% combined. In terms of grades of staff, 56.9% includes staff from grade K to I (lower grade), 41.5% from grade G to E, while those from grade A to D (most senior) were 1.54%.

Many respondents, 41.5% had worked for the period of over 20 years, followed by 38.5% who worked for the period of fewer than 10 years, and 20% of the respondents worked for the period of 10 to 20 years. Many respondents were from the Human resource department, 38% followed by other departments 24%, internal audit and accounts 23%, while the administration was represented by 14%.

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study are critical for determining the extent of the contribution of HR audit on staff performance. Socio-demographic characteristics will specifically assist in examining the extent HR audits are applied, benefits of HR audit, HR audit approaches as well as challenges associated with HR audits. Very important among them include education level, the department where respondents come from, years in service, and grade (seniority) of employees.

From the results above, in terms of the department from where respondents came from it shows that a greater percentage of the respondents came from HR department, n=25 (38%), Internal audit 23%, other technical departments (managerial) 24%, and administration 14%. Studies in support of this finding include that of Rothwell and Kazanas, (2003:143) who found that human resource auditors can come from inside the

HR department, from the organization outside the department, from outside the organization, or from some combination of these sources. This means that mixing respondents like this had the potential to understand issues of the HR audit practice and staff performance. Moke and Muturi (2015) also did a study in Kenya on the effects of human resource audit on employee performance in secondary schools. These researchers found that people who can understand issues of HR audit and performance could even come from a mix of non-teaching departments. Sharma (2013) studied the Perceptions of HR professionals on HR audit and supporting this socio-demographic variable, in terms of involvement of cross-functional teams for HR audit is a task force comprising of the cross functional team of employees. Still, these scholars should have emphasized the fact that HR department holds key or knowledge to the HR audit practice.

Level of education was taken to be a very important characteristic as well, hence the results revealed that most of the participants hold Masters Degrees $n=22$ (33.8%), while 31% ($n=20$) Diplomas and 26% ($n=17$) hold Bachelor's degrees. This means that 59.8% of the respondents are graduates. Such a higher level of education can help to understand issues of the topic of study under discussion better. This characteristic is also supported by the study of Moke and Muturi (2015) who found in their study that 60% and above of the respondents were above form four level of education, therefore, the right employee with information on Human Resource Audit in the secondary schools.

A number of years in service can also help to understand the topic of study better because employees will be able to remember as to when was HR audit last conducted and

be able to gauge on the associated benefits and some aspects associated with it. Analysis of results reveals that a greater percentage of respondents 41.5% (n=27) worked in the civil service for a long period, 20 years and above. Under this characteristic, Moke and Muturi (2015) in their study found that majority of the employees had worked in the schools in less than six years represented by 80% hence able to understand the employee performance influenced by Human Resource Audit conducted in schools. The conclusion of these researchers seems to be unfounded because working for a less period of time cannot guarantee knowledge on the topic of study in question. It has to be the other way round, that working for a long period ensures or influences knowledge on the topic under discussion.

In terms of grade of respondents, a lot of them were from K to I, and G to E. This means that though most of the participants hold Bachelors and Master's degrees and have worked for a period of 20 years and above, most of them have not yet risen to the position of the director (grade D).

4.3 Extent HR audits are undertaken in the Ministry

The objective here was to seek responses on the extent HR audits are undertaken in the Ministry of Education and possible reasons to that effect.

The Likert scale was utilized where respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to whether the Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits. Results appear in the figure 4.1

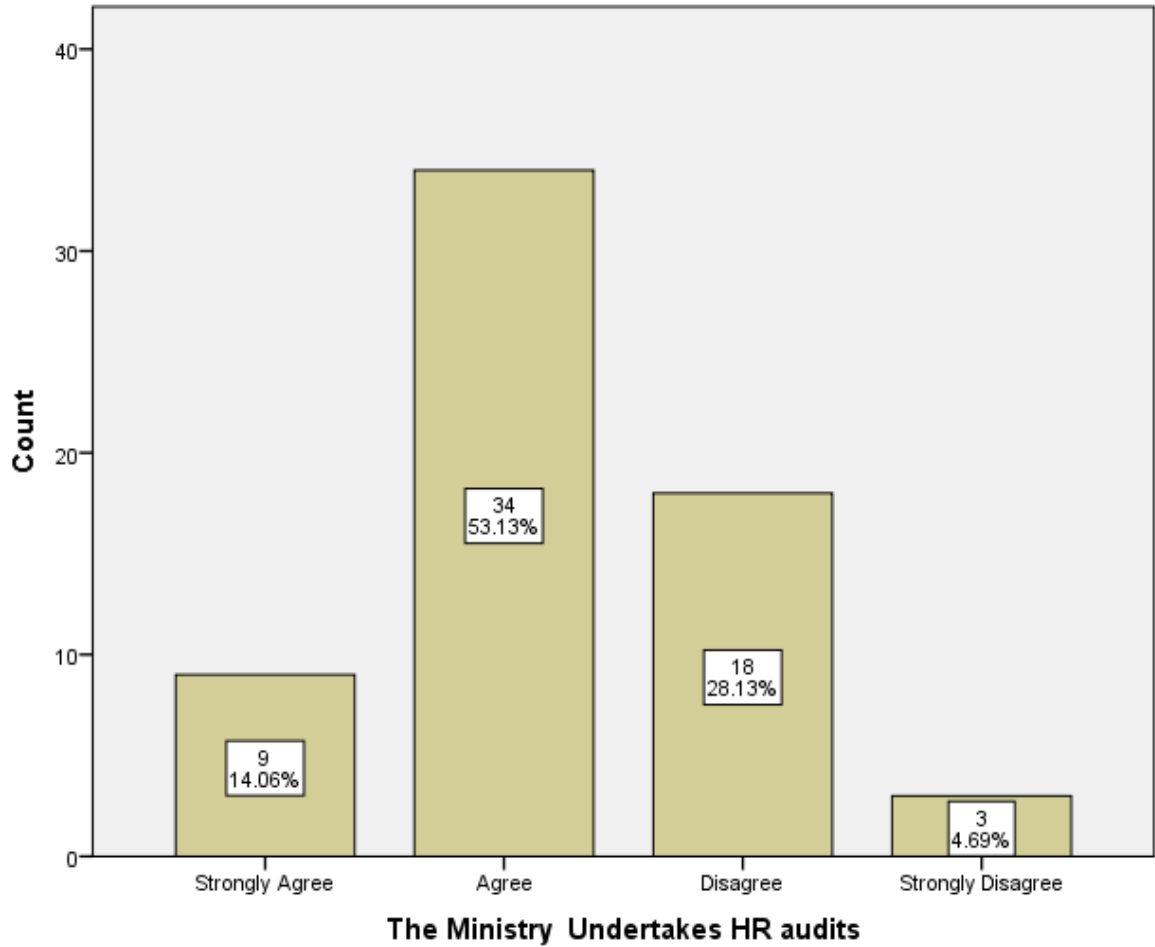


Figure 4.1 Extent HR audits are undertaken in the Ministry

Respondents representing 14.06% strongly agreed that the Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits, while 53.13% just agreed that the Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits. Respondents representing 28.13% disagreed with the assertion while 4.69% strongly disagreed. In short, 67.19% (43) of all the respondents (62) agreed with the assertion that Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits while 32.81% disagreed with the assertion.

This means that more people are aware that the Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits regardless of the type and without necessarily defining the frequency.

Out of the 43 respondents who agreed that the Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits, 30 (69.76%) responded that these audits are usually conducted after one (1) year while 13 respondents shared their views on the rest of the options, said that the audits are conducted at most every month. This indicates that the frequency that they responded to is in terms of after every one year. Nineteen (19) respondents of those who disagreed that the Ministry does not undertake HR audits frequently, 18 indicated that it undertakes HR audits after one year. This means that 94.7% of those who disagreed understood that it is done after every one year, hence not frequently done.

4.3.1 The Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits (Likert scale) and how often does the Ministry undertake HR audits cross-tabulation

The results of the assertion that the Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits were cross-tabulated with the question on how often to see the relationship on the two answers. Related to the question, on whether the Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits, a follow-up question was asked on how often.

Table 4.2 The Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits and how often does the Ministry undertake HR audits cross tabulation.

	How often does the Ministry undertake HR audits						
		Every month	Every 3 months	Every 6 months	After 1 year	Don't know	Total
The Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits (n=62)	Strongly agree	1	1	1	6	0	9
	Agree	6	0	4	24	0	34
	Disagree	0	0	0	15	1	16
	Strongly disagree	0	0	0	3	0	3
	Total	7	1	5	48	1	62

Thirty four (34) participants out of 62, representing 54.8% agreed that the Ministry of Education frequently undertakes HR audits. Out of those (n=34), who agreed with the assertion 24 representing 38.7%, mentioned that the frequency is mostly in terms of after every one (1) year. Those who strongly agreed with the assertion (n=9) representing 14.5%, 6 of them also recognized that the frequency is after every one (1) year. Likewise, 16 out of 62, (25.8%) disagreed with the assertion and 24.2% (n=15) of those who disagreed still indicated that this is because HR audits are mostly done after every one year. In short, cross tabulation has revealed that there are mixed views on the frequency of HR audits conducted by the Ministry of Education. A Greater percentage of respondents in total 77.43%, (n=48) indicated that the Ministry of Education undertakes HR audit after every one year.

The frequency of HR audits has got an implication on the performance of staff because audit comes with recommendations to correct deviations. This finding suggests that people understand the frequency of HR audits in the Ministry in the context of after every one year. This is unfortunate because such a frequency cannot guarantee improved staff performance; it has to be done regularly, at least every month or two months because there are a lot of HR practice areas which need to be audited. A study by Yadav and Dabhade (2014) supports this finding who found that in some cases employers are not making sufficient investment in auditing the implementation of policies. That is also why Durai, (2010:578), pointed out that the Human resource audit must not be considered as a one-time activity; rather it must be conducted on a regular basis. The problem with Durai's argument is that 'regular basis' has not been specified, and Kumar et al, (2015) also fall in the same line of thinking with Durai, that nowadays, the audit is done regularly in the organizations. Still, Kumar and friends are not able to determine frequency.

This finding is also supported by Campbell et al, 2002, p. 49 in Ukil, (2015) who pointed out that limited companies are bound by law to conduct formal financial audits, but the programs concerning people are hardly given the same measure. The HR function is often overlooked for audits/measurement tools, to assess its effectiveness and legal regulatory compliance as argued by Judith Brown, (year not indicated). In terms of the annual basis, Genga (2014) also supports this finding who pointed out that human resource audit is much like an annual health check, while Sharma (2013) also reported that frequency of external HR audit is very less, as 60% of the organizations had it only 0-3 times in last

10years, only 20% had it 7-10 times and none had it more than 10 times in a year. Results of this finding resonate very well with what is argued by the above scholars, and the point is that not only here in Malawi do we rarely conduct HR audits as revealed at Ministry of Education, even in other countries in Africa and elsewhere. The argument is that this tendency of conducting HR audits after one year must change if we are to experience the much-needed benefits accrued from HR audit.

4.3.2 Reasons and How often cross-tabulation

How often does the Ministry of Education undertake HR audit was cross-tabulated with reasons to justify the said frequency, Table 4.3 has details. A lot of respondents, (45 out of 59 participants) representing 76% indicated that the Ministry undertakes HR audits after every 1 (one) year. The main reasons for that include lack of funding (25 responses), HR audits not seen as apriority (17), no clear policy on HR audits (13) and lack of HR audit training (10).

Literature is void on this finding since most studies just end up at frequency aspect and fail to probe more as to why such a frequency. Not seen as a priority and lack of clear policy on HR audit and lack of training seem to make more sense here as compared to lack of funding. The argument is that if lack of funding is an issue why other audits like financial audits receive more attention than HR audits.

4.3.3 HR Practice area mostly audited in the Ministry of Education

HR practice areas which were tested include; training and development, performance management, HR planning, rewards management, records management and staff establishment. Staff establishment topped the list, with 43.08%, of the respondents, saying it is mostly audited, followed by performance management 24.62%, and records management 18.46%. HR planning was the lowest, 1.5%⁴ followed by training and development and rewards management with 3.08% each. 6.15% of those responding to this question mentioned other different HR practice areas

Table 4.3: Reasons and how often cross tabulation

Reasons for such frequency	How often does the Ministry undertake HR audits						
	Every month	Every 3 months	Every 6 months	After 1 year	Don't know	Total	
Lack of funding	1	0	3	25	0	29	
Lack of training	0	0	1	10	1	12	
Negligence	0	0	0	2	0	2	
Not seen as a priority	4	1	1	17	0	23	
No clear policy	3	0	2	13	0	18	
Checking illegal recruitments	0	0	0	4	0	4	
Others	0	0	2	6	0	8	
Total	7	1	5	45	1	59	

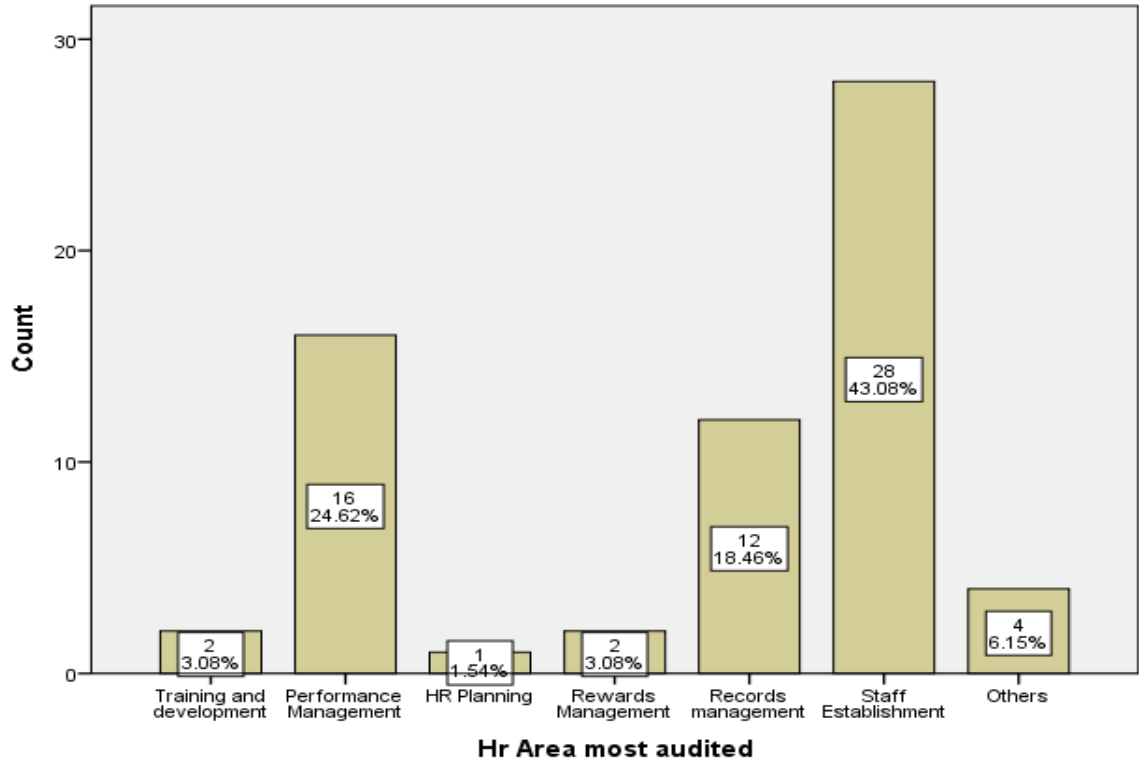


Figure 4.2 HR practice area mostly audited

The results show that staff establishment also commonly known as the head count is the most audited HR area and this aspect has always been linked to payroll. Most researchers overlook this aspect, but it is important to appreciate and try to link it to the performance of employees. This is an aspect which just looks at the number of employees in an organization against the established posts. The argument is that poor performance of staff could be due to the repeated implementation of HR audits on HR practice areas which cannot necessarily help to improve individual staff performance. Performance management comes second with a score of 24.6% mainly because respondents linked this to the commonly practiced performance appraisal which is also mostly conducted at the end of the year. Since most respondents indicated that HR audits are mostly conducted

after every one year, the link can be drawn here on that's why these practice areas (staff establishment and performance management) which are also mostly done after one year are topping the list. Other HR practice areas are not mostly audited or not audited at all against what Kumar et al, (2015) pointed out that the HR audit covers various functions. There is a relationship between conducting HR audits every after one year in the Ministry and the type of HR audits mostly conducted like staff establishment.

4.3.4 Who mostly conducts HR audits in the Ministry

Answers regarding who mostly conducts HR audits were sought. Respondents were given options like Ministry's HR staff, Internal Auditors of the Ministry, National Audit Office, and Private auditors as those who conduct HR audits. Figure 4.3 below shows that Ministry's HR staff mostly conducts HR audits (58.46%) followed by Internal Auditors (23.08%). National Audit Office (NAO) do not do it frequently with only 4.62% of respondents, while 7.69% said private auditors conduct HR audits for the Ministry. 6.15% of all the respondents for this question said that they are not sure on who conducts HR audits in the Ministry.

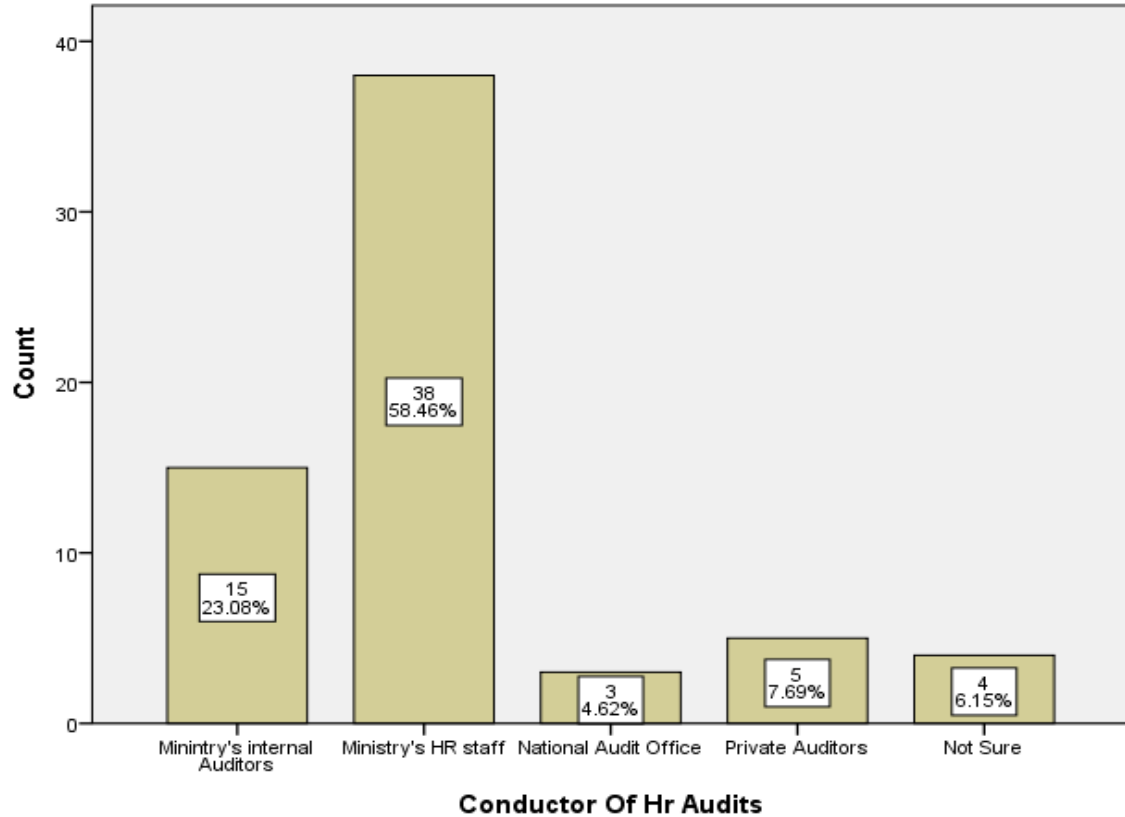


Figure 4.3 Conductor of HR audits

4.4 Benefits of HR audits to the Ministry of Education

This section was aimed at establishing the respondents' perception on the link between HR audits and staff performance mainly by looking at benefits of HR audits in the context of performance indicators that come about as a result of HR audits. Another test was also done on the extent of the contribution of HR audit on staff performance in relation to other factors like training, qualification, experience, employee rewards and leadership. Respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree as to whether HR audits help to improve staff performance. Results are presented in figure 4.4

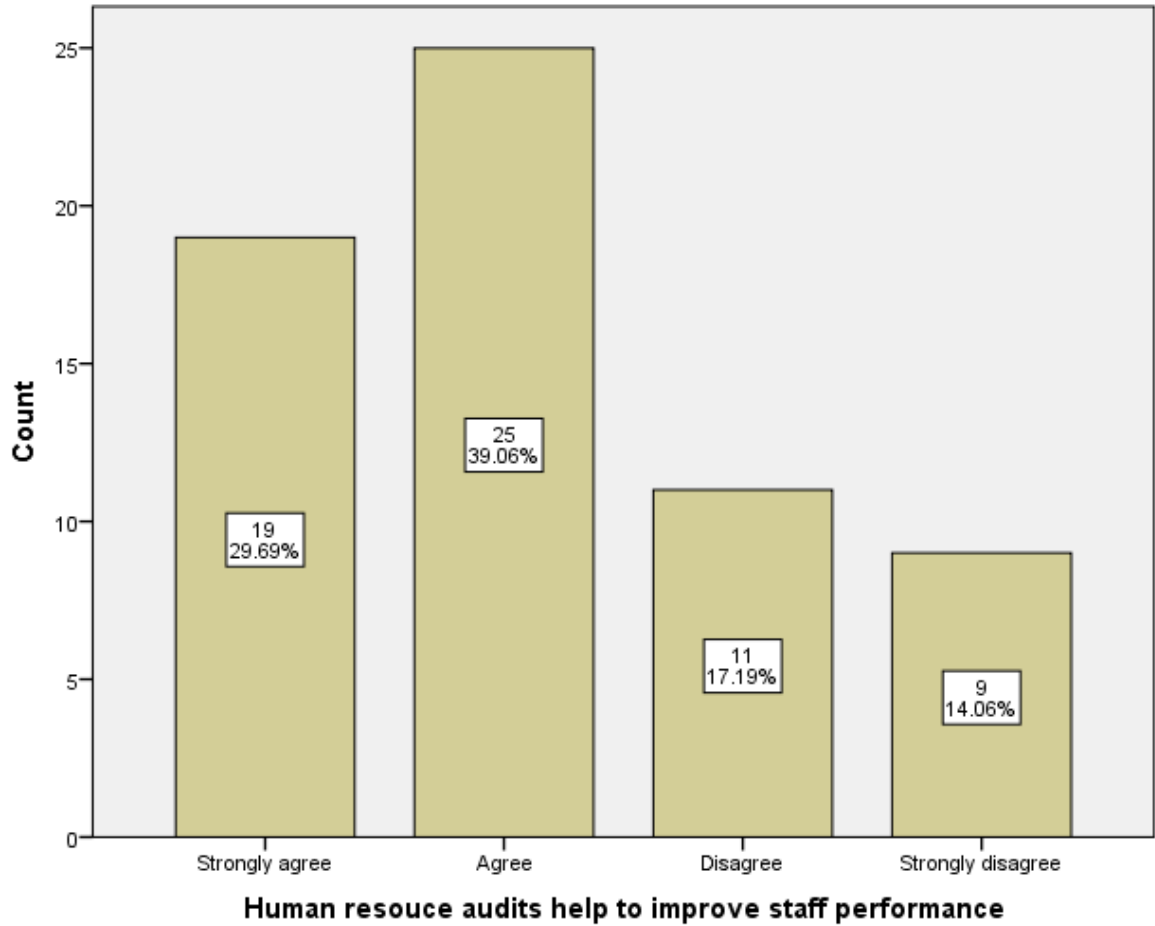


Figure 4.4: Human resource audits help to improve staff performance

Respondents (29.69%) strongly agreed with the assertion that HR audits help to improve staff performance while 39.06% agreed. 17.19% disagreed with the assertion while 14.06% strongly disagreed. This means that of the 64 participants that responded to the question, 44 of them (19+25) representing 68.8% agreed by perceiving that HR audits help to improve staff performance while 20 respondents (11+9), representing 31.2% disagreed.

4.4.1 Department and HR audits help to improve staff performance cross tabulation

The above answers have been cross-tabulated with responses from the departments to see which department agreed most with the assertion.

Table 4.4 Department and HR audits help to improve staff performance cross tabulation

HR audits help to improve staff performance					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total (%)
Administration department (%)	2.0	9.0	4.0	0.0	15.0
Human resource department (%)	9.0	17.0	3.0	8.0	37.0
Internal audit department (%)	11.0	8.0	4.0	0.0	23.0
Other departments (%)	8.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	25.0
Total	30.0	40.0	16.0	14.0	100.0

Departments of Human resource management and internal audit generally agreed that HR audits help to improve staff performance as 26.0% of participants from HR department (9%+17%), and 19.0% from internal audit (11%+8%) agreed with the assertion. Administration department relatively agrees with the assertion but not the same extent as HR and internal audit departments. Other respondents from technical departments but

targeting managerial positions are skeptical because much as 14.0% agrees, 11.0% of them are still skeptical (do not agree).

Results of the analysis according to the respondents' perception in figure 4.4 indicates that human resource audits help to improve staff performance as overall, according to results in figure 4.4, 70.0% (30.0% +40.0%) agreed with the assertion. Moke and Muturi (2015), in their study also found that 60% of the respondents indicated that the Human resource audit affects the employee performance while 40% indicated that the Human resource audit did not affect the employee performance. This means that staff members in the Ministry of Education understand the fact that HR audit improves staff performance. Kaplan and Norton, (2010) pointed out that in recent years; the human resource audit has been translated into what has been called an evaluation of an employee. This finding, therefore, is in tandem with what Ali (2013) found, that effective personnel evaluation system is the significant aspect to enhance performance and efficiency of civil servants.

The finding is in line with what most scholars and researchers found, that HR audit contributes to improved staff performance as over 60% of the respondents agreed with the assertion which in essence answering and confirming to the speculation in the conceptual framework. The finding also augurs well with Dehaghani and Samea's (2014) HR audit process model as a theoretical framework that explains on the contribution of HR audit to achieving the overall strategic objectives of the organization. The model places HR audit at the center as the factor or human resource management practice that helps to achieve the overall organizational objectives.

Under this finding, literature is void again except on the already discussed conductor of HR audits in the Ministry. This suggests that Internal Auditors and HR staffs are commonly found conducting HR audits and are also aware of the fact that HR audit help to improve staff performance. Many respondents from other departments as compared to HR and audit sections are still skeptical about the assertion, and this could be attributed to the fact that since HR audit is an administrative and management tool and such officers from other departments could have less knowledge and fail to appreciate its impact to the organization. The central argument based on the results is that a lot of staff members from the departments which are administrative in nature appreciate more to the fact that HR audits help to improve staff performance or that there is a link between HR audit and staff performance according to the respondents' perceptions.

4.4.2 Extent of the contribution of HR audit to staff performance among other factors

Respondents' perceptions were further established on the link between HR audits and staff performance in the presence of other factors. Six factors perceived to have a positive impact on helping to improve staff performance were listed and respondents were asked to scale them from the strongest factor to the weakest. These factors include employee experience, employee qualification, employee rewards, training and development, leadership and HR audit itself. The scale of 1-6 was developed where 1 denoted strong factor to improving staff performance and 6 as the weakest factor. At the end, scores for each factor were added to see which factor is stronger or weaker than the other in as far as helping to improve staff performance is concerned. This means that the lower/smaller

the total for the factor (from all respondents) the stronger the factor and vice versa. 61 participants responded to the question, this means for example if all 61 respondents choose *employee experience*, as 1, it means total score for employee experience will be 61, (61*1), and that signifies a strong factor. If all participants score *experience* as 6, it means total score will be 366 (61*6) which signifies a weak factor.

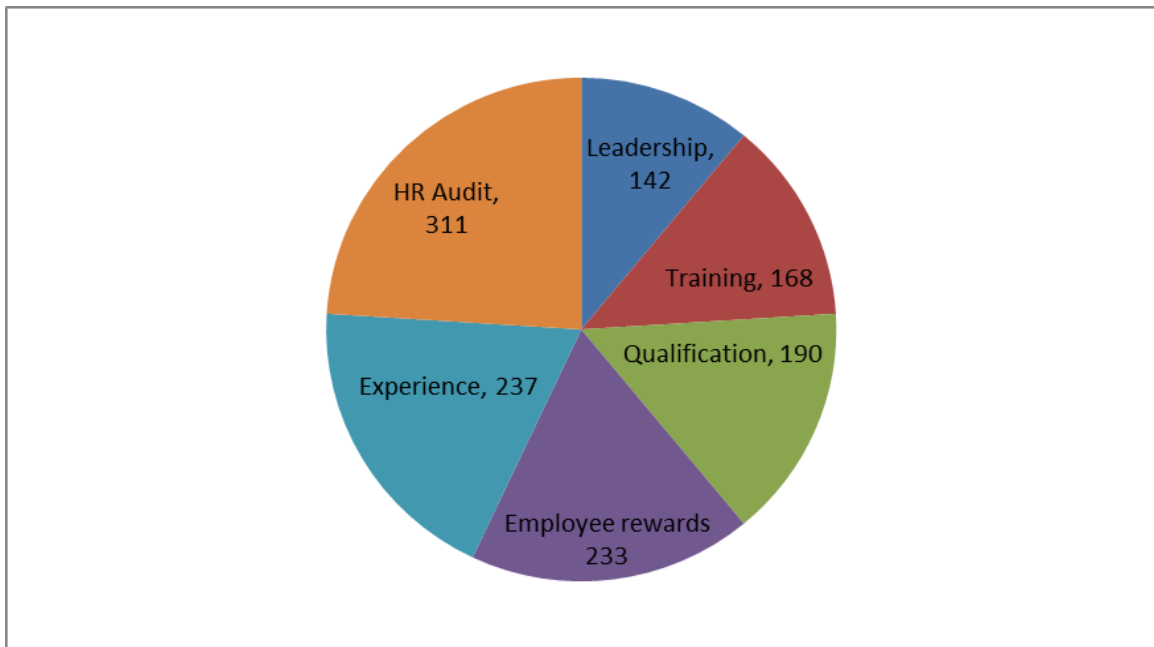


Figure 4.5 Strength of HR audit to improving staff performance among other factors

The results (chart above) indicates leadership as the factor that can most help to improve staff performance with the lowest score of 142, meaning that it is the strongest factor in as far as helping staff performance improvement is concerned. Training follows leadership with a score of 168, while qualification comes third with a score of 190. The fourth strong factor is employee rewards with a score of 233, followed by experience

with 237. HR audit comes last as the factor that can help improve staff performance with a score of 311.

Literature is void again on such a finding, as many studies just conclude that HR audit contributes to the improved staff performance in organizations without necessarily subjecting HR audit to other factors to see its position. By void, it does not necessarily mean that there are no studies on leadership and training on staff performance, but aligning these factors with HR audit.

The study on factors affecting employee performance conducted by Thao and Hwang supports the finding who among other factors found that leadership style is the most important factor that helps to improve employee performance in an organization, followed by training and motivation but these scholars did not mention an element of HR audit in their study. The leadership style within an organization has a bearing on encouraging or inhibiting employee's performance (Armstrong & Murlis 2004; Cronje et al 2001). The bottom line according to the respondents' perceptions in this study is that HR audit is still a factor that contributes to the improved staff performance but the extent is not the same as that of leadership, training, and other factors within the human resource management practice.

This study reveals that although HR audit help to improve staff performance, it is not a magic bullet on its own; there are other factors that employee performance depends on like leadership. This finding could also be explained in the context of HR audit as a practice that can include a lot of human resource management issues like training and

development, employee rewards, leadership, and much more hence, HR audit recommendations lead to the implementation of the best practices encompassing the above factors. In other words, even if it is perceived that HR audit contributes to improved staff performance, when aligned with other factors, other factors will take precedence, but this does not mean that there is no link between HR audits and staff performance.

4.4.3 Perceived staff performance indicator frequencies

Responses were sought on the benefits of HR audits in the Ministry mainly on the basis of staff performance indicators derived from the practice. Indicators of performance like reduced absenteeism, improved quality of work, reduced disciplinary cases; reduced costs and commitment were listed. Multiple responses were allowed and the table below indicates results of the responses.

Table 4.5: Staff performance indicator frequencies

Staff performance indicators	Responses		
	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Reduced absenteeism	7	8.0%	10.9%
Improved quality of work	42	48.3%	65.6%
Reduced Disciplinary cases	15	17.2%	23.4%
Reduced costs	15	17.2%	23.4%
Commitment	8	9.2%	12.5%
Total	87*	100.0%	135.9%

*Multiple Response were allowed; therefore, the sums of responses are greater than

100%

A lot of respondents mentioned improved quality of work (48.3%) as the benefit/indicator of staff performance gained through HR audits in the Ministry, and this is represented by 65.6% with multiple responses. Reduced disciplinary cases and reduced costs followed quality of work, with 17.2% each, while commitment and reduced absenteeism were the least, with 9.2% and 8.0% respectively.

As already highlighted in the literature review section, employee performance as argued by Ali (2013), performance of civil servants is the accomplished works. The above factors are in essence the outcome or the completed works. The suggestive model of research by freedman test, adopted by Dehaghani and Samea (2014) in their study, *Investigating the effect human resources management audit on improving key outputs of organization*, found among other factors that enhancing quality of product, satisfaction of customer about product, impact on profit amount after implementing audit of human resources management. The finding on specific outcomes of HR audit has also been supported by the outcome of the works of many scholars as pointed out by Ukil, (2015) that conducting HR audit regularly and routinely can ensure employee discipline, commitment and increase efficiency. Mahapatro, (2010) also concurs with friends that very typically, small to medium-size companies realize almost instant cost savings once an audit is complete and changes are implemented.

Yadav and Dabhade (2014) in their study as well, found that HR audit helps in increasing quality and productivity of the work. The finding indicates that the Ministry of Education benefits a lot after HR audits are implemented as the quality of work improves, cost

reduction experienced, as well as staff disciplinary cases being reduced among other benefits as perceived by many respondents. In conclusion, in answering the research question on the benefits of HR audit, many respondents perceive that Ministry of Education experiences a lot of benefits as a result of the implemented HR audits hence HR audits linked to staff performance.

4.5 HR audit approach mostly applied by the Ministry of Education

This objective was mainly aimed at getting responses on the HR audit approach which is mostly applied to the Ministry, and an approach which helps to improve staff performance. HR audit approaches like; statistical, comparative, compliance, outside authority, and management by objective were identified and respondents were asked to identify which one is the most applied approach in the Ministry.

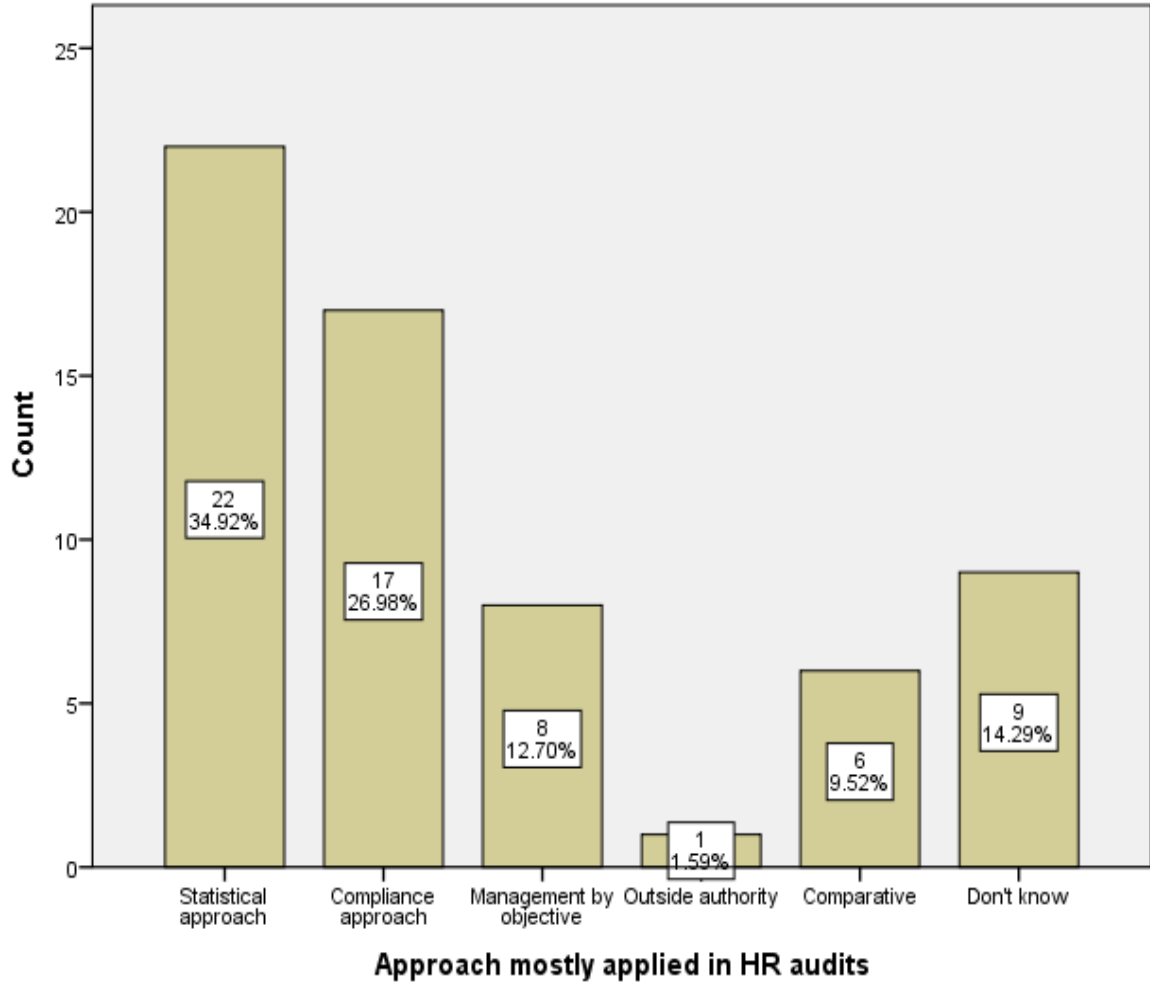


Figure 4.6 HR audit approach mostly applied in the Ministry of Education

Out of the 65 (n=65) participants, 63 responded to this question, and 34.92% of those responded indicated that statistical approach is the most applied approach. Compliance approach follows statistical approach with 26.98% of respondents saying that it is the most applied approach. 12.7% of the respondents chose Management by objectives as an approach usually applied in the ministry when conducting HR audits. The comparative approach followed management by objectives with 9.52% while only one respondent

indicated outside authority as an approach commonly applied. 14.29% of the respondents said they don't know which approach is mostly applied in the Ministry.

The literature discusses more on HR audit approaches in the context of what they constitute and their meanings but studies on an approach mostly applied and the one which can help to improve staff performance are limited hence, this study feels this gap.

The results of the findings show that 34.92% of those responded indicated that statistical approach is the most applied approach in the Ministry. Mahapatro (2010:219) points out that from the existing records the audit team generates the statistical standards against which activities and programs are evaluated. The viewpoint raised by Mahapatro (2010) can still be adopted to relate the results of this finding on the most audited HR practice area of staff establishment/headcount or payroll. Indirectly, the results on statistical approach as the most applied approach can be linked to the most audited HR audit area here already discussed above in the first objective, and this is because, in staff establishment/headcount, an auditor is mainly influenced in advance or informed by the existing records and statistics generated prior to the exercise. Studies specifying on the mostly applied HR audit approach are limited as most scholars are not coming out clearly hence this study add knowledge to this existing body of literature.

Compliance approach follows statistical approach according to the results of this study with 26.98% of the respondents saying it is the most applied approach. Like statistical approach, indirectly, Rothwell and Kazanas (2003) seem to rate this highly as well as they alluded to the fact that compliance approach assumes that department is responsible

for ensuring organizational compliance with laws, rules and regulations. Supporting Rothwell and Kazana's views, Shaban, (2012) argues that compliance with the legal provisions is particularly important as any violation makes management guilty of an offence.

Any audit including that of human resources is rooted in following the procedures and rules of the game. This means that although many scholars and researchers have not been able to pin down on what are the most applied approaches, results of this study under this aspect speaks volumes based on the objectives of most audit activities, on ensuring compliance with the set standards and laws. 12.7% of the respondents indicated Management by objectives (MBO) hence Ponmalar and Punitha (2014) alluded to the fact that HR auditing involves a regular and systematic examination of organizational practices and accomplishments via organizational objectives. Under this approach, though literature is void on the direct rating, seems to make sense with the current performance management and performance audit that is being undertaken in the Ministry. In a bid to answer the first research question on the extent HR audits are undertaken by the Ministry, a good number of respondents also indicated performance management as another HR practice area mostly applied. Comparative and outside authority approaches were not rated highly 9.52% and 1.5% respectively. Since these two are closely related, and that they involve comparing practices from the two different organizations or department and an outside consultant, the two approaches are limited in their application in the Ministry of Education.

4.5.1 Reasons and HR audit approach mostly applied by the Ministry (cross-tabulation)

Respondents were also asked a follow-up question on the option they gave based on the above answers to solicit their views on the reasons as to why such an approach is mostly applied. The results of the options given were cross-tabulated with reasons and quantified those reasons to see which reasons were coming out frequently and for which approach.

The results of the cross tabulation are summarized in the table below;

A lot of despondences, 28 were about statistical approach and out of that number, 22 responses were for the reason that by using statistical approach, staff establishment is well controlled. In terms of those (24) who indicated compliance approach as an HR audit approach mostly applied, 14 responses were for the fact that this approach focuses on policy. Some respondents (13) indicated management by objectives, and a good number of them (8) mentioned that it is because this approach creates goals to measure performance. Six (6) respondents indicated comparative approach and mentioned that it is because this approach is transparent and efficient. Only one respondent indicated outside authority as an approach mostly applied and mentioned that it's because this approach help to detect poor performance.

Table 4.6: Reasons and HR audit approach mostly applied by the Ministry cross tabulation

	Approach mostly applied in HR audits						
		Statistical	Compliance	MBO	Outside authority	Comparative	
Reasons for choosing the approach	Detects Poor Performance	0	5	3	1	0	
	Establishment well controlled	22	3	0	0	0	
	Transparent and efficient	0	0	0	0	6	
	Creates goals to measure performance	4	1	8	0	0	
	Approach focuses on policy adherence	1	14	2	0	0	
	Others	1	1	0	0	0	
	Total		28	24	13	1	6

Twenty eight (28) out of the total of 72 despondences were about statistical approach, and a lot of them (22) were hinging on the fact that with statistical approach staff establishment is well controlled. Shaban (2012) relates to absenteeism and turnover hence supporting this finding since staff establishment control and looking into issues of staff turnover are the same. Second to statistical approach is compliance approach, 24 and a lot of them (14) hinges on the fact that this approach focuses on policy. According to Mahapatro (2010), compliance is the review of past practices, to determine if actions taken followed legal requirements, company policies, and procedure. Mahapatro is also in

support of the reasons given under compliance approach. 13 respondents indicated management by objectives (MBO) and 8 of them mentioned that it is because this approach creates goals to measure performance. Audit team researches the actual performance and compares it with the previous set objectives, as argued by Shaban, (2012:126) in support of the above viewpoint.

4.5.2 HR audit approach that mostly helps to improve staff performance in the Ministry

After determining on which approach is mostly applied in the Ministry which is statistical, respondents were also asked to indicate which approach mostly helps to improve staff performance in the Ministry. A lot of participants (49.12%) mentioned management by objective (MBO). Compliance approach followed MBO with 29.82% of the respondents saying it helps to improve staff performance. Very few respondents indicated statistical approach, comparative and outside authority with 7.02%, 7.02% and 3.51% respectively. 3.51% of the respondents also said they don't know which approach helps to improve staff performance. Figure 4.7 presents results

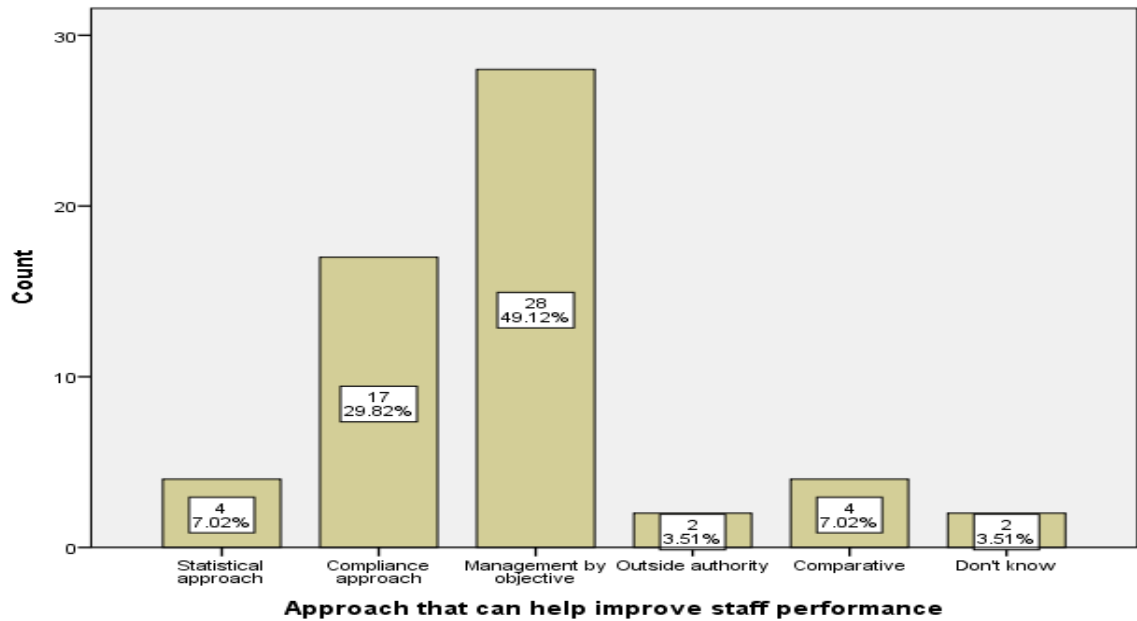


Figure 4.7 HR audit approach that helps to improve staff performance

Some studies are done on human resource audit and try to link it to the performance and efficiency of staff but an aspect of soliciting the views in as far as subtopic 5.5.2 is concerned is missing. Although the statistical approach has been mostly found to be applied in the Ministry it has been discovered that it cannot or does not help to improve staff performance. Management by objectives is rarely applied but found to be the one which helps to improve staff performance. This finding resonates very well with a finding on those who are a bit skeptical (31.8%) that HR audit does not help to improve staff performance. This is because an approach which is mostly applied in the Ministry scored 7.02% in as far helping staff performance is concerned. This finding suggests that of course HR audit help to improve staff performance but many respondents perceive that mainly when Management by objectives (MBO) is applied. MBO approach encourages improved staff performance mainly because employees are aware of what was agreed

with their superiors and would strive to achieve something in fear of being rated poorly. A study conducted by Kumar et al (2015) in India though did not specify, seem to argue that two approaches can concurrently be applied as they indicated that HR audit attempt to evaluate the performance of staff and measure record of compliance with statutory provisions regarding the HR function. The argument by these researchers combines compliance and MBO approach though they have not precisely stated so. Most scholars or researchers have not come out clearly on the specific approach that mostly helps to improve staff performance, but this study finds MBO to that effect.

4.5.3 Mostly applied approach and potential to improve performance cross tabulation

Responses to the mostly applied HR audit approach were cross-tabulated with a potential to improve staff performance. The results are as shown in table 4.8.

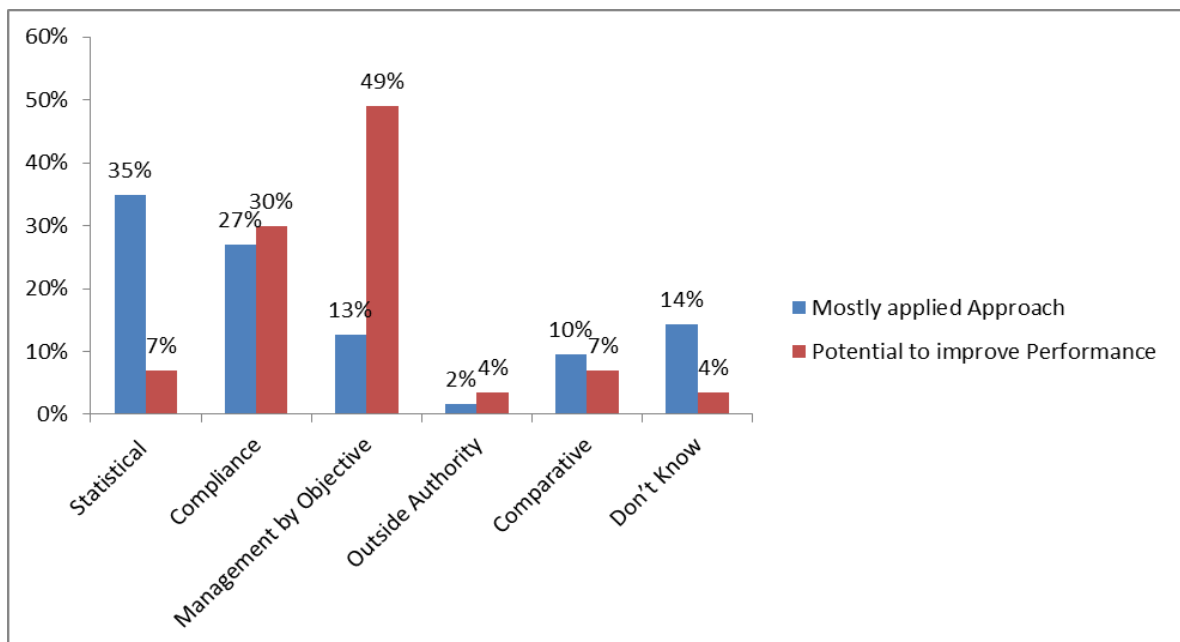


Figure 4.8: Most applied approach and potential to improve performance (Cross tabulation)

As already discussed above, the results of the cross tabulation show that statistical approach is the most applied HR audit approach in the Ministry but it has less potential to improve staff performance. Management by objectives is the one with the highest potential to improve staff performance as perceived by many respondents but it is not the mostly applied approach in the Ministry. This brings us to the same issue of an HR practice area of say, staff establishment or headcount which is mostly enforced due to the problems of ghost workers informed by statistics on the wage bill but not mainly with an aim of improving staff performance. Other studies have not been able to make such relationship so far hence this study adds knowledge. Compliance approach has a relative potential to improve staff performance as compared to statistical but it is not frequently applied a statistical approach. On the other hand, compliance approach is mostly applied as compared to MBO but it has less potential to improve staff performance as compared to MBO. Outside authority and comparative approaches have both less potential to improve staff performance as well as not mostly applied in the Ministry.

4.5.4 Reasons why MBO help to improve staff performance in the Ministry

Since this study centers on HR audit and staff performance, having solicited the views on which approach helps to improve staff performance, a further follow-up question was posed to the respondents to explain why the chosen approach help to improve staff performance. The table below summarizes the results on the reasons for choosing MBO.

Table 4.7: Why MBO help to improve staff performance

Reason	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	2	3.1	4.1	4.1
Don't know	1	1.5	2.0	6.1
Focuses on policy	12	18.5	24.5	30.6
Valid Measure performance against objectives	17	26.2	34.7	65.3
Not sure	1	1.5	2.0	67.3
Others	9	13.8	18.4	85.7
Transparent	7	10.8	14.3	100.0
Total	49	75.4	100.0	
Missing	16	24.6		
Total	65	100.0		

Forty nine (49) participants responded to the question and gave out various reasons. Out of the 49 respondents, 17 of them representing 34.7% (valid percentage) said that MBO help to improve staff performance because it measures performance against objectives. 12 of the 49, representing 24.5% mentioned that because this approach focuses on policy, while 14.3% said that it is transparent. Measuring performance of staff against set objectives has been found to be the main reason, and this should be the case because as already pointed out employees are aware that if something is not done on their scheduled work they would be rated poorly and that has an implication to their job. In support of measuring the performance of staff against set objectives as the reason why MBO improves staff performance, Shaban (2012) alluded that the audit team researches the actual performance and compares it with the previous set objectives. Arguably, on the

other hand, could also mean that employees' attempt to improve their performance based on this approach is driven by fear.

The reason for 'focusing on policy' seems to also fall under compliance but in this case, respondents make reference to the fact if objectives are set and they agree, they become binding and in essence act as a policy which they need to follow. The focusing on policy issue as a reason sounds better as well because most of the times matters of policy are geared towards improving performance in most organizations. A few respondents said that there is transparency in this approach. These respondents gave reference to the fact that under MBO, there is a kind of open appraisal, employees and their supervisors (raters) do it together according to the previously set objectives.

The argument to this reason as well is that respondents gave it in the context of performance appraisal and not necessarily MBO as an HR audit approach. The transparency issue is based on the already completed works and has nothing to do with gauging on an individual performance. In other words, MBO cannot improve performance on the basis that there is transparency since there will be open appraisal during the rating. MBO centers on the comparison of the set objectives agreed upon between employees and their supervisors and the actual achievements at the end of the specified period, hence employees strive to achieve what was agreed upon.

4.6 Challenges faced in conducting HR audit at the Ministry of Education

Respondents were asked to indicate on the associated challenges of HR auditing and aspects, as presented in the table below, were outlined from where respondents were supposed to choose from. Multiple responses were allowed and the results are presented in the table below.

Table 4.8: Challenges faced in conducting HR audit

HR audit challenges	Responses		
	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Lack of knowledge on what to audit	27	30.0%	45.0%
Lack of Knowledge on Auditing Techniques	19	21.1%	31.7%
Lack of Legal support	5	5.6%	8.3%
Perception that audits are for finances only	32	35.6%	53.3%
Labour demanding standards of employment	7	7.8%	11.7%
Total	90*	100.0%	150.0%

*Multiple responses were allowed; hence, the sums of responses are greater than 100%

Perception that auditing is for finances only came out as the main obstacle to HR audit in the Ministry with 35.6% of the respondents choosing it as the challenge. ‘Lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR’ also came out as the second challenge of HR audit that scored 30.0%. ‘Lack of knowledge on auditing technics’ came out as the third challenge (21.1%) that cripples HR audit. A few responses came out indicating that ‘labour demanding standards’ and ‘lack of legal support’ (7.8% and 5.6% respectively) as other challenges associated with HR auditing. According to the results 35.6% (n=32) of those who responded mentioned perception that audits are for finances only as a

challenge associated with HR audit. In support of this finding Sharma (2013) in a related study argued that the term human resource auditing borrows its title and rationale from accountancy, it also makes use of the system and methods of the social and scientific information.

Sherer and Kent 1983, cited in Genga, (2014), similarly, argued that the audit function emerged originally to monitor one specific type of accountability relationship.

Many scholars here in line of their thinking relate accountability mechanism of auditing in the context of financial resource management. This could be due to the fact that the concept of audit as also argued by many scholars has been rooted in finance and studies in the field (HR audit) are rare. HR audits due to this reason have not been receiving much attention and when they are done they are understood in the context of headcount, payroll which is a finance component, or just a monitoring mechanism not mainly from the audit's perspective. This finding of perception on finances can also be supported in the context of law, as Campbell et al, 2002 cited in Ukil, (2015) pointed out that limited companies are bound by law to conduct formal financial audits, but the programs concerning people are hardly given the same measure. This means that respondents' indication of perception on finances has not been accidental as most of them may have been exposed to laws emphasizing on the need to conduct financial audit than HR audits. Reading the Malawi Public Finance Management Act, (2003), Internal Audit Act (2003), Internal Audit Charter (2011) of Malawi, one clearly gets an understanding that indeed audit is mainly rooted in finance.

Lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR (30.0%) came out as the second challenge of HR audit while lack of knowledge on auditing techniques came third with 21.1% of the respondents saying poses as a challenge that cripples HR audit. These two aspects are closely related and a study by Mahalingam (2014) supports such findings where lack of knowledge of the audit objectives, which requires better awareness was found to be one of the problems with HR auditing. Other literature and studies on who conduct or should conduct HR audit also seem to support this finding. As a study by Sharma (2013) found that 60% of the professionals consider that the external auditor must have expertise in integrated HR systems, experience in HR systems implementation as a consultant or as an executive, organization diagnosis and OD skills, knowledge of the business and HR strategies, prior experience in audit. Sharma's findings are in agreement with the fact that lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR and lack of auditing skills are indeed some of the HR audit challenges evident even in his study.

As already pointed out, employees from HR department within the organization or other departments within the organization or outside the organization can conduct the exercise. As argued by Rothwell and Kazanas, (2003) HR auditors can come from inside the HR department, from the organization outside the department, from outside the organization, or from some combination of these sources, a point that supports these finding because HR audit seems to lack conductors who have both auditing techniques as well as knowledge of the HR function. The point is that if auditing is rooted in finance more than HR it means those who conduct it have a bias in finance, on the other hand, the HR

knowledgeable people who conduct the exercise it means they lack specific auditing techniques which are commonly learnt in a financial audit.

Others, (7.8%) responded that labour demanding issues also pose as a challenge to HR auditing. Supporting this finding, Ponmalar and Punitha (2014) in their paper on *Challenges to HR audit in Hospital administration in India* found that labour demanding standards of employment and working conditions and ethical issues also termed as ‘administrative abilities’ as challenges of HR audit. This finding was one of the main challenges to HR audit in the study by Ponmalar and Punitha unlike in this study when a few recognized it.

Lack of legal support, 5.6% came out as the last challenge in the ranking. In support of this finding, Campbell et al, 2002 cited in Ukil, (2015) just like what has been pointed out under the first challenge argue that limited companies are bound by law to conduct formal financial audits, but the programs concerning people are hardly given the same measure. Reading the Malawi Employment Act, and other related Acts in Human resource management, you will rarely find such concepts like audit, HR auditing, while in Public Finance Management Act, (2003), Audit Act (2003), Internal Audit Charter (2011) of Malawi, the concept of audit on issues of finance is common.

4.6.1 Dealing with HR audit challenges at the Ministry of Education

Table 4.9 of chapter 4 present results of the findings on what the Ministry should have been doing to deal with some of the challenges above. Mainly challenges like that of

perception that audit is for finance, and lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR was considered and linked to the solutions given.

Participants gave various answers as solutions to this effect ranging from training and sensitization, increasing (adequate) funding to cater for HR audits, recruiting more auditors, submitting HR audit reports and give feedback and also conducting frequent HR audits. Multiple responses were allowed and from the table above, training and sensitization of employees on HR audit came out as the main solution with 25.0% of those who responded to this question endorsing it as the only way out to deal with such challenges as the perception that audit concerns finance only. Conducting frequent HR audits also came out as the second solution with 21.3% of the respondents endorsing it. Increasing funding, submitting HR audit reports, and recruiting more auditors came out as other solutions with 17.7%, 15.5% and 13.4% of the respondents endorsing them respectively.

Table 4.9: Dealing with HR audit challenges

Dealing with HR audit challenges	Responses		
	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Training and sensitization	41	25.0%	63.1%
Increase funding	29	17.7%	44.6%
Recruit more auditors	22	13.4%	33.8%
Submit HR audit reports and give feedback	26	15.9%	40.0%
Conduct frequent HR audits	35	21.3%	53.8%
Others	11	6.7%	16.9%
Total	164*	100.0%	252.3%

*Multiple responses were allowed; therefore, sums of responses are greater than 100%

Results show training and sensitization of employees on HR audit as the main solution with 25.0% (n=41) of those who responded endorsing it as a way to deal with such challenges of perception that audit concerns finances only. Mahalingam (2014) supports the finding by arguing that such problems require better awareness. Based on the problems of perception and lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR, respondents realized that training and sensitization which is also awareness could be the solution to dealing with such problems/challenges. Training and sensitization will consequently change employees' perception of the said problem hence employees will be able to understand that audit also does apply to the HR field. Such sensitization to staff should also be embedded in some of the policy documents as a way of strengthening it.

Conducting frequent HR audits came out as the second solution with 21.3% (n=35) of the respondents endorsing it. In support of this finding, Durai (2010) argues that the Human resource audit must not be considered as a one-time activity; rather it must be conducted on a regular basis. The problems of the said perception and lack of knowledge could indeed be dealt with through conducting HR audits on a regular basis, but this regular basis has to be specified say, monthly or quarterly. Conceptual framework speculates that HR audit leads to improved staff performance, but the argument still is that unless the said problem of perception and lack of knowledge are resolved through regular HR audits, the performance of staff can be improved. Conducting an HR audit regularly and routinely can ensure employee discipline, commitment and increase efficiency (Ukil, 2015). This study also finds submitting HR reports and giving feedback as one of the solutions in dealing with the above challenges discussed. This finding has been supported

by the study by Sharma (2013) who reported that 60% of the respondents consider that audit report should be shared with the employees.

Increasing funding, submitting HR audit reports, and recruiting more auditors came out as other solutions with 17.7%, 15.5% and 13.4% of the respondents endorsing them respectively. These factors though if resources permit it is important to implement them, cannot depend much on them because resources will always be limiting, say increasing funding or recruiting more auditors to require more resources. On the other hand, if funding and lack of auditors on the ground is a problem why other audits receive more attention, unlike HR audits. The solution on submitting HR audit reports seem to suggest that HR audits are conducted but encounter problems of completion that can only be dealt with through report submission and acting on such reports.

4.7 Chapter summary

From the analysis above it has been found that the Ministry frequently undertakes HR audits but the understanding of this frequency is in the context of after every 1 year which is a long period. Respondents also mentioned staff establishment as a type of HR audit that is mostly conducted. Lack of funding, not seen as a priority, no clear policy on HR audits and lack of training were the main reasons why the Ministry conducts HR audits after every one year.

Most respondents agree or perceive that HR audits help to improve staff performance in the Ministry or there is a link between HR audits and staff performance, with the quality

of work, reduced disciplinary cases and reduced costs as the main indicators of staff performance. Further, to that, it has been revealed that HR audit is not a magic bullet on its own as other factors found to be stronger than HR audit in as far as improving staff performance is concerned. The argument can still be advanced in this case that since HR audit includes a lot of HR practice areas, issues of training, rewards, leadership, qualification are still part of HR audit, but the point is that these factors are more conspicuous than HR audit itself when linked to staff performance improvement.

A statistical approach has been found to be the most applied HR audit approach but perceived to be less potential to improve staff performance. Management by objective (MBO) on the other hand has been perceived to be an HR audit approach that helps to improve staff performance but not mostly applied in the Ministry. This means that if MBO is mostly applied, staff performance could improve further than as it is now. MBO according to respondents measures staff performance against set objectives that's why it has the potential to improve performance.

The perception that audit is for finances came out as the main challenge to HR auditing followed by lack of knowledge on what to audit in Human resource management. Training and sensitizing staff, conducting frequent HR audits came out as the main solutions to such challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the topic of study and gives recommendations for the better improvement of staff performance through HR audits. It also highlights on the future research area to be addressed, the gap which this study exposed

5.2 Major conclusions

The purpose of this study was to establish respondents' perception on the link between HR audit and staff performance in the Ministry of Education. In achieving this objective, extent on how HR audits are undertaken had to be examined, HR audit benefits to the Ministry determined, approach mostly applied and the one that helps to improve staff performance examined too. If HR audit contributes to improved staff performance it means challenges impacting on HR audits could also limit the achievement of the improved staff performance hence, determining challenges of HR audit was also one of the specific objectives of the study.

It is evident from the results of this study that according to the respondents' perception that has been established, there is a link between HR audit and improved staff

performance in the Ministry of Education, but HR audits are not frequently done as they are conducted after one year. A statistical approach to the HR audit is mostly applied in the Ministry of Education but this approach has less potential to help in the improvement of staff performance. Unlike other studies, in terms of the extent of the contribution to improved staff performance, this study finds that staff performance could be more pronounced if HR audits are conducted as frequently as possible like every three months focusing on performance improvement areas and through the application of right approaches like management by objective (MBO).

Challenges like that of the perception that audits are for finance, lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR and lack of HR auditing techniques found to impact negatively on the HR audit practice. Respondents proposed training and sensitization of staff, increasing the frequency of HR audit not just on an annual basis to be the probable solutions to the challenges.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Extent HR audits are undertaken by the Ministry

Since it has been found that the Ministry undertakes HR audits after every one year, for better improvement of the performance of staff and an organization as a whole, it should consider implementing this practice (HR audit) at least every quarter of the year focusing on performance improvement areas.

5.3.2 Benefits of HR audit to the Ministry

To ensure improved performance of staff the Ministry should make sure that HR audit encompasses a lot of issues like training, leadership, rewards management, performance management and other HR management practice areas and not just staff establishment (Headcount) and payroll related issues.

5.3.3 HR audit approach

The Ministry's HR audit team or any other team involved in HR audit for the Ministry should be devoting its effort on the application of management by objective (MBO) as an HR audit approach since MBO has been perceived that it helps to improve staff performance unlike statistical approach according to the findings of this study. This MBO approach should in some cases also be combined with compliance approach for improved staff performance.

5.3.4 HR audit challenges

To deal with the main challenge of the perception that audit is for finance, the Ministry should train and sensitize staff on matters relating to HR audit, by making staff aware that HR audit is equally important just like any other type of audit.

5.4 Area for further research

Since the study has established the respondents' perception on the link between HR audit and staff performance as respondents perceive that HR audit help to improve staff performance particularly when MBO is mostly applied, establishing the actual linkage between MBO approach to HR audit and improved staff performance in relation to other approaches is an area for further research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of introduction

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI



PRINCIPAL
Prof. Richard Tambulasi, B.A., M.A., Ph.D

Our Ref:
Your Ref:

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE
Dept. of Political and Administrative Studies
P.O. Box 280, Zomba, Malawi
Telephone: (265) 1 524 222
Fax: (265) 524 046

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

01 February 2017


Dear Sir/ Madam

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FOR KUSENI VISABWE

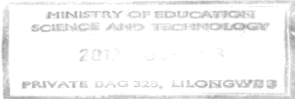
This letter serves to introduce Mr. Kuseni Visabwe, a Masters student at University of Malawi, Chancellor College, in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies. Kuseni is studying for a Masters Degree in Public Administration and Management (MPAM). As part of his studies, Kuseni is conducting research that will help him write his dissertation. Any support rendered to him in his research will therefore be highly appreciated.

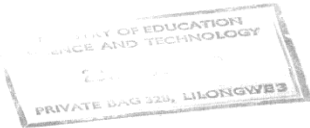
For further information, you can contact his supervisor Professor Lewis B. Dzimbiri on 0 995 446 569 or myself on cell number (265) 99 474 0643. Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



Michael Jana, PhD
Lecturer in Political Science and Development Studies
Department of Political and Administrative Studies
University of Malawi
www.chanco.unima.mw





Appendix B: Consent form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

My name is Kuseni Lemani Visabwe. I am a Master's degree program student at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, and am conducting a study as part of the requirements for the completion of the degree.

The title of my study is Human Resource Audit and Staff Performance in Organizations: The Case of Ministry of Education Science and Technology. The questionnaire therefore seeks to find out your views on this topic of study.

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in the study. Before we start, I would like to emphasize that:

- Your participation in the study is completely voluntary.
- You are free to decline to answer any question if you feel so.
- You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time.

I also assure you that your responses will be kept strictly confidential and your name will not be declared at any point in the final report of the study as this is for the study purposes only.

May I request you that you sign this form to show that you have really understood it.

_____ (signed)

_____ date

Appendix C: Questionnaire

HUMAN RESOURCE AUDIT AND STAFF PERFORMANCE IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE OF MALAWI'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Instructions:

- *Tick or circle an option(s) appropriate to you and also fill the blank spaces provided*
- *The information gathered in this questionnaire will only be used for the academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality*

A. Demographic characteristics of respondents:

- i. Gender of respondent: M= F=
- ii. Post.....
- iii. Department
- a. Administration
 - b. Human Resource
 - c. Internal audit
 - d. Other managerial
- iv. Grade:
- a. K-I
 - b. G-E
 - c. D-A
- v. Number of years in service:
- a. Less than 1 year to 10 years
 - b. 11 to 20 years
 - c. Over 20 years

vi. Level of Education (highest):

- a. Primary certificate 1
- b. JCE 2
- c. MSCE 3
- d. College Certificate 4
- e. College Diploma 5
- f. Bachelor's degree 6
- g. Master's degree 7
- h. PhD 8
- i. Others specify 9

B. Extent Human Resource Audits are undertaken in the Ministry of Education

1. The Ministry/department frequently undertakes HR audits:

- a. Strongly agree 1
- b. Agree 2
- c. Disagree 3
- d. Strongly disagree 4
- e. Don't know 5

2. How often does the Ministry/department undertake HR audits

- a. Every month 1
- b. Every 3 months 2
- c. Every 6 months 3
- d. After 1 year 4
- e. Don't know 5

3. What could be the reason (s) leading to the above scenario (answer above), at 2

- a.
- b.

4. Which Human Resource Management practice area is mostly audited:

- a. Training and development 1
- b. Performance management 2
- c. HR planning 3
- d. Rewards management 4
- e. Records management 5
- f. Staff establishment 6
- g. Others: specify 7

5. Human Resources audits are mostly conducted by:

- a. Ministry's Internal Auditors 1
- b. Ministry's HR staff 2
- c. National Audit Office 3
- d. Private Auditors 4
- e. Not sure 5

C. Benefits of Human Resource Audits in the Ministry of Education

6. HR audits help to improve staff performance

- a. Strongly agree 1
- b. Agree 2
- c. Disagree 3
- d. Strongly disagree 4
- e. Not sure 5

7. Arrange the following factors in order of importance as factors that help to improve staff performance (Starting with the most important ones; with 1 as having more influence on performance than going towards 6, or A, having more influence on performance than going towards F).

- a. Organizational leadership
- b. HR audits
- c. Training
- d. Employee rewards

- e. Employee qualifications
 - f. Employees experience (*Just use letters, like; a, c ,b, d, e. f...or numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6*)
8. Staff performance indicator (s) brought about by HR audit includes:
- a. Reduced absenteeism 1
 - b. Quality of work 2
 - c. Reduced disciplinary cases 3
 - d. Reduced costs 4
 - e. Commitment 5
 - f. Don't know 6

D. Approaches of Human Resources Audit applied by the Ministry of Education

9. An approach which is mostly applied when undertaking HR audit is:
- a. Statistical approach 1
 - b. Compliance approach 2
 - c. Management by objective approach 3
 - d. Outside authority approach 4
 - e. Comparative approach 5
 - f. Don't know 6
10. Why do you think the above approach (you have mentioned) is mostly applied
- i.
 - ii.
11. The above approaches are well known to auditors
- a. Strongly agree 1
 - b. Agree 2
 - c. Disagree 3
 - d. Strongly disagree 4
 - e. Not sure 5

12. Which HR audit approach do you think can mostly assist to improve staff performance

- a. Statistical approach 1
- b. Compliance approach 2
- c. Management by objective approach 3
- d. Outside authority approach 4
- e. Comparative approach 5
- f. Don't know 6

13. What could be the reason to your answer above:(a-e)

- i.
- ii.

E. Challenges in conducting Human Resource Audits in the Ministry of Education

14. What challenges do you think are associated with HR audits in your Ministry

- a. Lack of knowledge on what to audit in HR 1
- b. Lack of knowledge in auditing technique 2
- c. Lack of legal support 3
- d. Perception that auditing is for finances 4
- e. Labour demanding standards of employment 5
- f. Others: specify 6

15. How do you deal with such challenges mentioned above

- i.
- ii.

END OF QUESTIONS

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND RESPONSES.